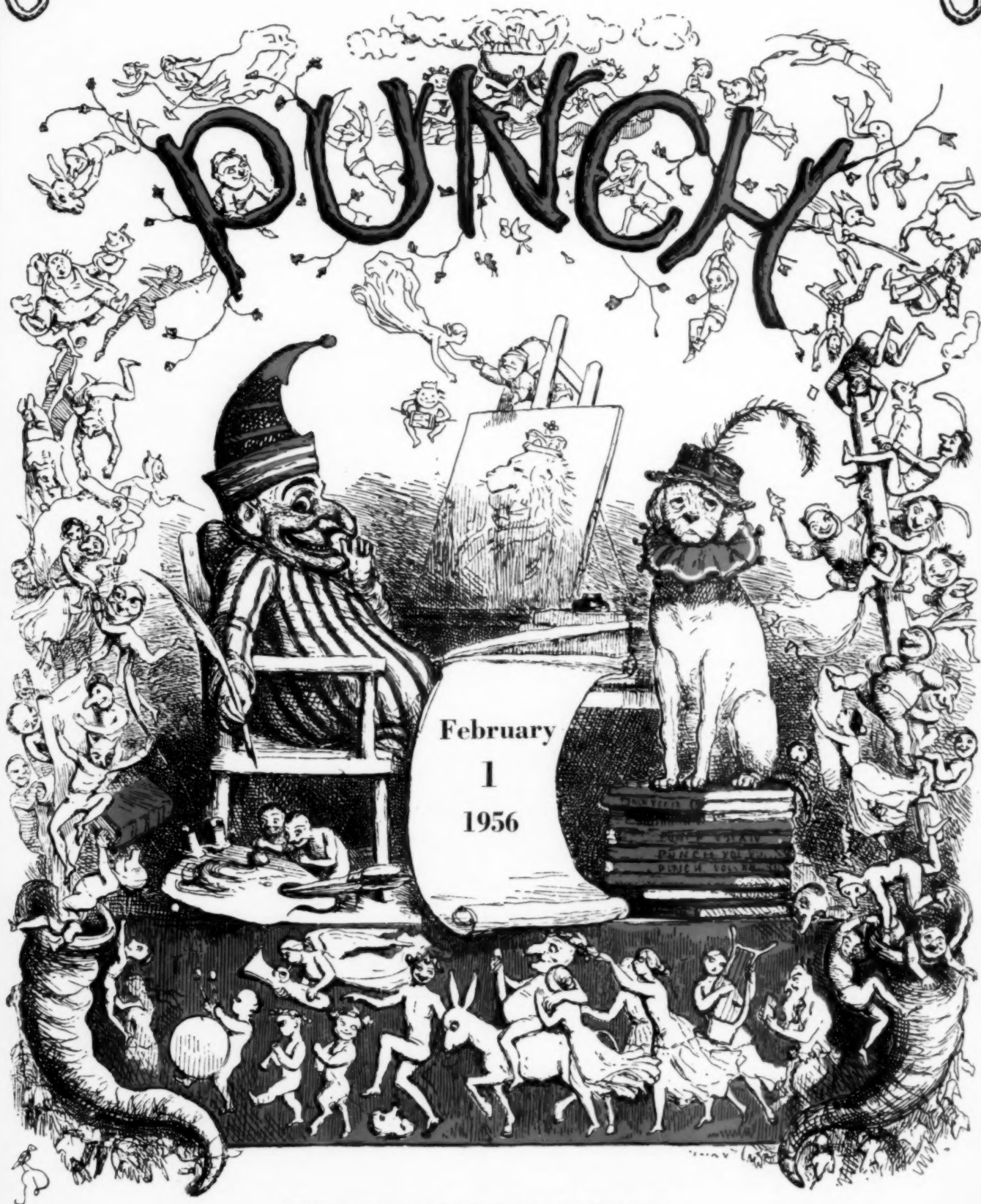
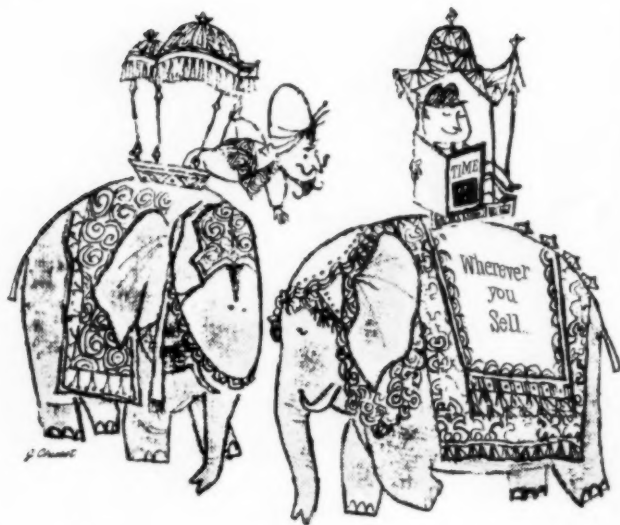


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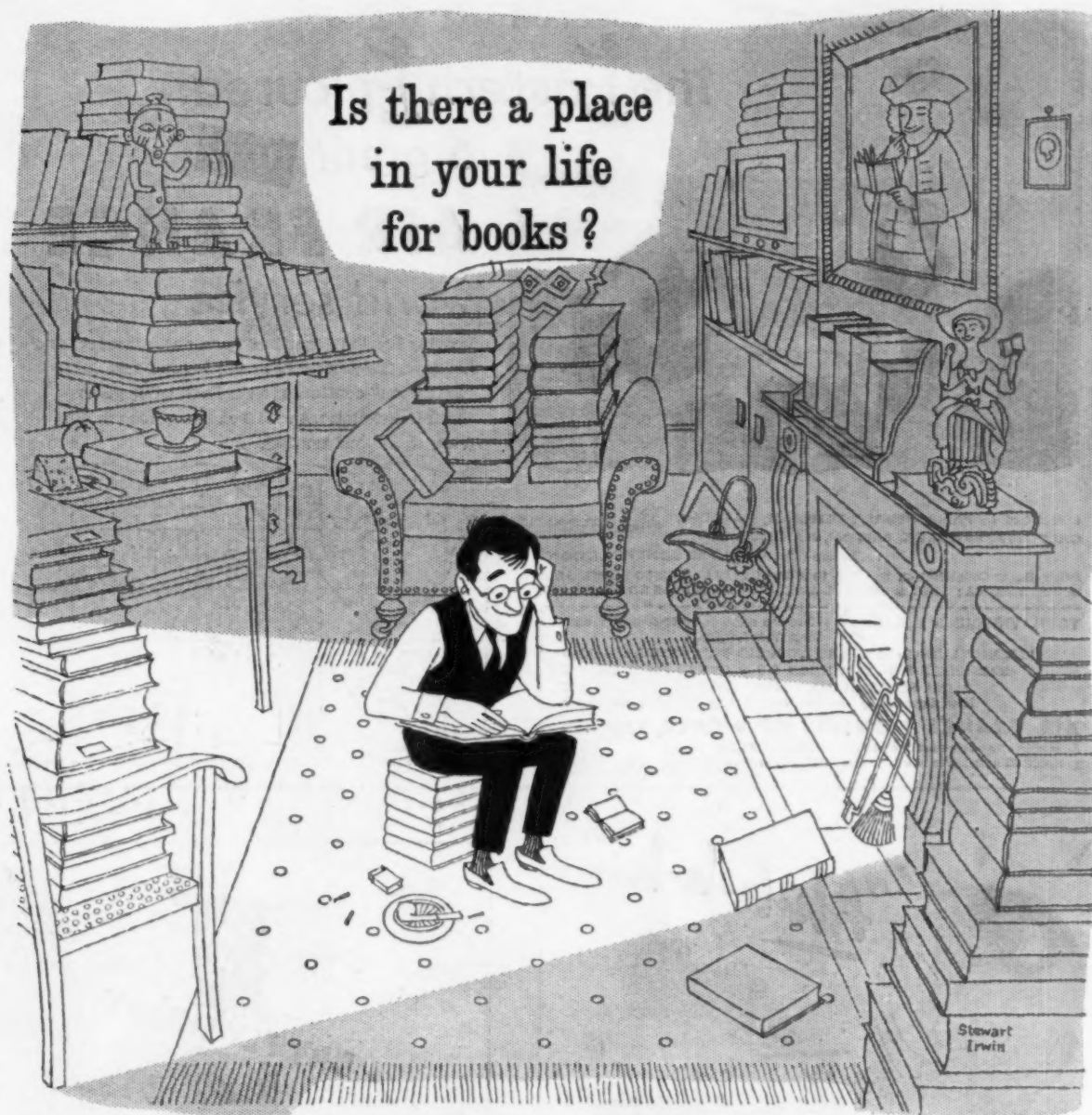
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CHARIVARIA

HAVING "for many months been subject to criticism from travellers" about the way his trains run, says a New York dispatch, the president of the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad has resigned his post. By British standards this seems a defeatist course. Our man would have simply whacked in a bill for £23,000,000.

First Principles

ONE danger arising from the glut of industrial disputes is that their origin should be overlooked or—as the weeks drag by—forgotten. This leads to unreasonable bias on the part of



suffering consumers. They should remember that what seems to them mere obstructionism on the worker's part may in fact be no more than a fight for justice. As a case in point, the current overtime ban by miners in the Durham area is based on the men's dissatisfaction with the quality of their free coal.

Drive-Away Bargain

COULSDON and Purley accident-prevention planners are suggesting that motorists should be shocked into cautiousness by the placing of a car wrecked in a road accident at a traffic danger point. Judging by last week's Ministry of Transport announcement that five out of six vehicles are mechanically faulty, the trouble would be to keep back the eager crowds trying to put down a deposit on it.

Might Mean Earl Attlee

MR. HARRY POLLITT's allegation that the creation of three-quarters of a

million unemployed is the deliberate ambition of "the ruling class" caused a sensation among his audience of Trade Unionists at Holborn Hall the other evening. They had no idea that there was such treason in their midst.

Blow for the Whelk Trade?

REPORTS that Brighton's new publicity manager had "previously promoted Cheltenham and Cambridge" are said to have aroused mixed feelings. No doubt styles can be changed in public relations, as in the other arts, and probably everything will be all right; but any seaside Chamber of Commerce would feel a twinge at the notion of a Promenade suddenly alive with arthritic brigadiers and old bicycles.

Gala Attraction

THOSE who assert that the nation is growing flabby from an excess of push-button entertainment were put firmly in their places the other Sunday afternoon. Despite the supposed allurements of two television channels, three sound programmes and concerts on the record-player round a blazing fire, many Britons muffled up against the January



gales and sought their fun the hard way. "Thousands of sightseers" (*The Times*) went to Wadhurst to enjoy the scene of death and destruction provided by a crashed night-fighter.

Eye of the Beholder

"SIXTY feet below the earth and three hundred feet above it—who would want to paint a thing like that?" demanded Professor Richardson, P.R.A., in an

energetic bout of anti-Barbicanism. However, if the time ever comes, plenty of firms will tender.

New Way with Old Nuisances

WELL in the rear of the march of progress shuffles the political assassin, not a fresh idea in his head. The affair of the Scottish Republican Army and the cyanide pies was hardly out of the news before Herr Willi Kressmann, a West Berlin burgomaster, was being handed one of those old postal packets containing "a bomb set to go off if the parcel were opened." The time has come for greater subtlety and originality



in these circles. No public man to-day is sure enough of his general esteem to eat an unexpected pie, or investigate a ticking box. This is 1956. May we soon read that some administrator or other, watching a telerecording of himself, has been removed by a cunningly induced implosion of the cathode tube.

Employer's Liability

ALARM is spreading among British insurance men with the news of Mr. Nehru's nationalization of the profession. Could it happen here? Swift steps are being taken by leading companies to insure each other against it.

Simple Arithmetic

AMONG new increases announced by the Postmaster-General as part of his struggle to make the telephone service a going concern is a charge of threepence for telling a subscriber how much his trunk call has just cost him. Dr. Hill mustn't expect too fat a revenue from this. Most subscribers will be content

to know that it cost them threepence less than it would have done if they'd asked.

How's the Dumb Blonde Market?

THOSE people who have been acclaiming the automation age so loudly fell silent and thoughtful over the news that Ministry of Agriculture cheque-printing



machines were sending out cheques for £0 0s. 0d. Science can provide the monsters all right, but education will still have to find the Miss Frankenstein for the controls.

Mysteriouser

WINDSCREENS apparently shattered by a gunshot have for six years brought police and other experts to the Portsmouth Road to find the real cause—variously pronounced to be exhaust waves, temperature changes, road vibration, metal distortion, ill-fitting glass and atmospheric variations. It is not known whether any new theories will result from the latest incident, in which a lorry driver whose windscreen was apparently shattered by a gunshot saw a man disappearing with a gun.

Ghost Town

REPRESENTATIVES of the G.A.T.T. countries seem to have turned up at their latest conference in a defeatist mood, and early speakers fell over themselves to declare that they hadn't much hope of achieving anything. This pre-crushed approach could be accounted for by the absence of delegates from eight of the member countries, or by the refusal of most of those present to negotiate with any but a few old pals, or even by the anti-G.A.T.T. crusaders of the *Daily Express* leader page. Another explanation is that some ass decided to have the thing in Geneva.

Investment Hint

WITH frozen prices all the go

Consumers can begin

To hoard their hard-won pound or so

For when the thaw sets in.

THE COUTTS PLAN AT HOME

THE Coutts scheme for extending the franchise in Kenya is so immediately attractive that it is no wonder that plans are afoot to introduce it here. The scheme, in a few words, allots votes according to merit; a point apiece is scored for each of a list of selected virtues, such as being over twenty-one, earning £120 a year, having the M.B.E., belonging to a women's club, and so on. Three points qualify for a vote; after that, an extra vote is scored for every point.

The scheme will have to be modified to suit the slightly different conditions in Great Britain, but it will remain the same in essence. The main change proposed is that, in addition to scoring points for merit, voters will score negative points when any aspect of their lives seems to render them unworthy of the franchise. For example, peers, felons and lunatics will each be debited with one point, but can make up for them in other ways.

A few sample instances will show how the plan is to work.

1. Dr. Hewlett Johnson. One point each for M.A., B.Sc., D.D., and A.M.Inst.C.E. One point for being Dean of Canterbury. One point for founding and editing *The Interpreter*. One for other writing: *Soviet Strength*, *Soviet Success*, etc. Total, 7 points. This gives 3 for the initial vote, plus 4 extra, and the Dean thus has 5 votes at his disposal.

2. Sir William Haley. One point each for K.C.M.G., LL.D. One for being editor of the *Manchester Evening News*, one for being editor of *The Times*. One for being Director-General of the B.B.C. One for being Oliver Edwards. Total, 6 points = 4 votes.

3. W. S. Morrison. One each for P.C., M.C., Q.C., M.P. One for being Speaker of the House of Commons. Minus one for never having published a book. Minus one for not having eradicated his Scottish accent. Minus one for no honours. Total, 2 points. No vote.

4. Dr. Charles Hill. One each for M.A., M.D., D.Ph., LL.D., M.P. One each for being President of the World Medical Association, Hon. Sec. of the Commonwealth Medical Conference, Chairman of the Central Council for Health Education, Secretary of the B.M.A., Radio Doctor and Postmaster-General. Total, 11 points = 9 votes.

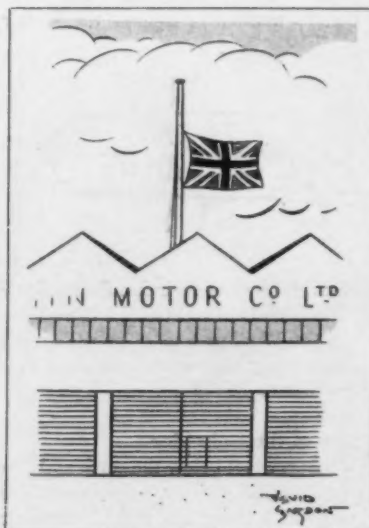
5. Leonard Hutton. One for captaining England at cricket. Minus one for being a professional. Minus one for having eradicated his Yorkshire accent. Minus one for having been a P.T. instructor in the Army. Minus one for not advertising hair-cream. Total, — 3 points = — 3 votes. (See below.)

6. Dame Margot Fonteyn. One for D.B.E. One for proficiency at dancing. Minus one for going about under a false name. Minus one for acquiring Panamanian nationality. Minus one for giving no recreation in *Who's Who*. Total, — 1 point = — 1 vote.

7. Lord Goddard. One each for Q.C., M.A., D.C.L. One for being Lord Chief Justice. One for being a knight, minus one for being a peer. Minus one for having sent the editor of the *Daily Mirror* to prison. Minus one for not having sent the directors of the *Daily Mirror* to prison. Total, 2 points, no vote.

It will readily be seen how under this system the most useful members of the community are given the greatest voting-power, while those devoted to less practical pursuits are curbed of their influence. In some cases an actual negative voting-power is attained; voters in this class will of course reduce the total vote of the candidate for whom they express their preference, and some novel techniques in electioneering may well be expected to develop to cope with this situation. This can do nothing but good.

B. A. Y.





EDEN (suddenly, after a long pause): "Darling!"
EISENHOWER: "Yes, Darling?"
EDEN: "Nothing, Darling. Only Darling, Darling!"



"Yes, but supposing it's only one man working at an enormous control panel?"

Jolly Roget

By PAUL DEHN

WE serious poets are frequently assailed by a flatulent urge to write a serious poem at moments when we have nothing to write serious poetry *about*. Professor Day Lewis told me recently that in such an emergency we should always try to keep our *technical* hand in by translating a foreign poem into English verse. Alas! the stratagem is originality's blind alley. You settle down to turning, say, Homer's *Odyssey* into heroic couplets—with Liddell and Scott at your right hand and Roget's *Thesaurus* at your left; and two or three days later, dizzy but triumphant, you emerge with:

*The wrath of Peleus' son, the direful spring
Of all the Grecian woes, O Goddess
sing!*

Pope, you think, couldn't have chosen better words; and when you come to look you find that he has chosen exactly the same ones.

The trouble with translating foreign poetry is that somebody has pretty nearly always been there *before*; and it was while I, personally, was trying to find some foreign poetry (in a reasonably familiar tongue) where nobody had been before that I suddenly struck inspirational oil. Nobody had ever translated English poetry into *more English*. I laid aside my Liddell and Scott and reached lovingly for my Roget.

Whole sections in this huge compendium of English synonyms are of course the purest poetry *per se*. An example? Turn to variants on "Jelly"

(as might some desperate hostess before a children's party) and inspiration is at once to hand. You may serve the pretty dears an epic array of dishes piled high with gelatin, aspic, mucilage, isinglass, colloid, mucus, phlegm, pituite, lava, glair, starch, gluten, albumen, syrup, treacle, gum, size, glue, emulsoid, soup, squash, mud, slush, ooze and (yum, yum, yum) slime.

Is butter on their bread too orthodox? They can have oil, fat, grease, tallow, suet, lard, oleomargarine, exunge (my God!), blubber, glycerine, stearine, elaine (poor girl), soap, wax, spermaceti, salve, pomatum, brilliantine, spikenard and, if they're good, rape.

Is jam too conventional a top-dressing? Glutted with Lava Shape and

wholesome Phlegm Mould, let the children spread their thin layer of nourishing exunge or spikenard with great dollops of pulp, paste, dough, sponge, curd, pap, rob, mush, fool, poultice and delicious grume.

You get my drift? What Roget can do in the way of epic innovation for a hackneyed English tea-party he can be made to do as epically for a hackneyed English poem. Under his fructifying wand an over-familiar poetic invocation like "Hail to thee, blithe spirit!" becomes "Hullo to you, jolly essence!" and Keats's barren opening to the "Nightingale Ode" blossoms into "My bosom twitches and a lumpish paralysis galls my susceptibilities, as though of tartar-emetic I had imbibed, or evacuated some pallid emulcent into the conduits."

Sustain the process, and the atmosphere of the whole Ode subtly changes. We have, in fact, the makings of a brand new *œuvre*. Naturally the emergent prose has still to be licked into poetic shape—but this should not be beyond the wit even of an amateur, fortified as he is by the knowledge that contemporary English poetry need neither scan nor rhyme.

Take, as a simple Beginner's Exercise, our National Anthem—whose admirable sentiments have become so blurred through over-familiarity that it should prove ideal for our innovatory purpose. In tackling Line 1 the student should remark that, under *save*, Roget has a special sub-section devoted to the synonym *preserve*: "embalm, dry, cure, smoke, salt, pickle, season, kyanise, bottle, pot, tin, can, husband, etc."

Zoroaster pot our amiable Begum.

There. Already a new world is opening, and by ringing the correspondent international changes on "God" and "Queen" we can make it newer still:

*Zoroaster pot our amiable Begum!
Thor pickle* our exalted Margravine!
Vishnu bottle our Sultana!*

Though the piece neither scans nor rhymes, it has a fine, antithetical, psalmodic ring about it, which only a pedant could mistake for prose.

Your fully-fledged professional poet, however, writes not for pedants but for all humanity; and British humanity has, on the whole, a penchant both for rhyme

and for metre. As an Advanced Exercise I perpend my own modest "translation" of Tennyson's *Break Break, Break*—the unfestive monotony of whose opening line must often have infuriated Roget and indeed has often infuriated me. The task was made more pleasant by the discovery (on p. 91 of the *Thesaurus*) that in certain technical circles *ships* are sometimes known as *bottoms*.

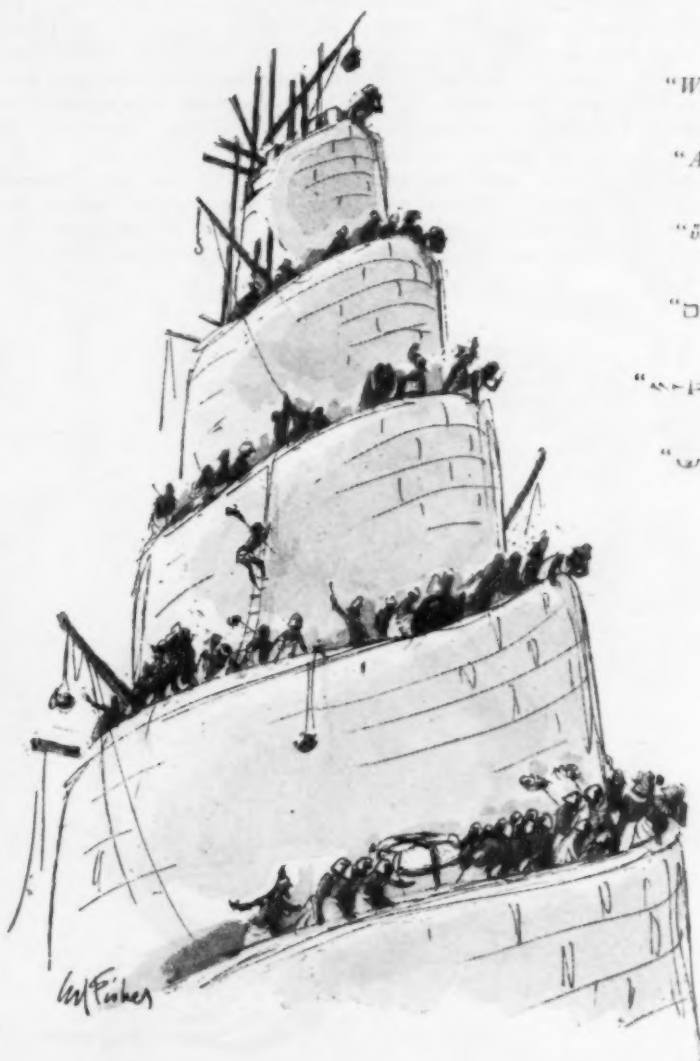
*Crack, split, crunch,
On thy hoar, dun flints, O Salt!
And I would that my glottis could
yodel
The notions that in me vault.*

*O well for the angler's brat
That he pules with his kith all
week;*

*O well for the blue-jacket younker
That he purls on his smack up the
creek.*

*And the puffed-up bottoms proceed
To their privacy under the butte;
But O for the graze of a missing
thumb
And the hum of a palate that's mute.*

This, I diffidently feel, has with Roget's help departed sufficiently from the original to be called new writing. I shall send it to John Lehmann.



"Water"

"Aqua"

"všop"

"מים"

"א-י-ל"

"Water"

* Or dry

My Public, Bless Them

By EN* D BL* T* N

ONE morning I woke up feeling very strange. I sat up in bed and wondered why.

"Why do I feel so funny?" I asked. "Why is my little head nod-nodding madly? Oh dear—the bears next door will be very, very cross. They will be pushing their tummies and growling. The little bell at the top of my little blue cap is tinkling Jingle-Jingle-Jingle—Jing. The bears will be wakened up!"

Then suddenly I remembered. How silly of me. All the toys in Joyland must have wakened very early and cleaned their little houses and polished their little faces until they shone. Then they must have gone off to play. For Joyland was having a holiday. It deserved one, don't you think?

Just after Christmas, lots of mummies and daddies wrote to Joyland and said that we should have some time off. "Oh dear," we all said, "whatever will the children do without us? But mummies and daddies can't be wrong."

They said we didn't make the children think. Well, that was silly of them, wasn't it? Children don't want to think, do they? I expect they meant something else.

Never mind. I washed the floor and cleaned my shoes and tidied my little house. How I wish Big-Ideas could have seen how tidy my house was! I sang as I polished my windows:

*"My heart is full of love for you
Millions of books in yellow and blue,
Read by daddies in despair.
Good-night, children, everywhere."*

Then suddenly I felt cheerful. "Dear, dear me," I said, "how clever I am this morning—who would believe I could make up funny little songs like that?"

Parp-parp said a car hooter. PARP-PARP! Blam-blam went the door. BLAM-BLAM!

Bother! It was my twenty-four publishers, all arriving together, trying to make Joyland go back to work again. They weren't worried about our feelings.

They were naughty little publishers, just like golliwogs, wanting such a lot of chocolate cake for themselves.

I opened my little golden window. "Go away," said I, "we have out-sold everything except you-know-what and nobody is grateful. Joyland is having a holiday. So there!"

They wouldn't go away, but I turned my back and danced the little dance that baby balls learn before they are able to bounce. While I was dancing, someone peeped in the window. It was Master Harry Humming-Top from I.T.A.

"Go away," I said, "Joyland is having a holiday. Get cruel little Sooty if you like and see if I care!"

"Please let me in," he begged. "Oh, don't talk like that! I don't want people to laugh at me again. Oh, please let me in."

"But I can't," I said. "Oh dear, I will have to hurry. Miss Hawkmoth the naturalist doll is coming for tea and sugared biscuits and I haven't put the kettle on!"

"Oh, please," said Master Harry Humming-Top. "It's terribly important. Children all over the world won't go to sleep because they've heard that Joyland is on holiday."

Another little song just popped into my head. Really, I don't know where it came from!

*"I'm only a little writer
Whom many mummies mock
But I make bed-time brighter
From New York to Bangkok.
My stories may be slender
But simple goodness thrives.
I catch the children tender
And they love me all their lives."*

Good gracious, would you believe it! Lots and lots of mummies and daddies had joined all the little publishers and Master Harry Humming-Top in the garden. They were all dancing to my song!

What fun we have in Joyland. Really, I could write a whole book about it, every day, if only I didn't have to sleep. I expect we will have lots and lots more adventures very, very soon, don't you?

MARSHALL PUGH

6 6

"TEACHER WHO CANNED CLASS JUSTIFIED"
Bukavayo Recorder

Indeed? By what standards?

Giovannetti's
Zoo



"Me? Drinking?"



"Aren't there any nice walks?"

Mum's the Word

By LORD KINROSS



ROYAL families are the first in any land to live their lives in public, for the sake of the People. But other, humbler families exist, capable of making a similar sacrifice. One such is a family named McCorquodale. The lives of two of its members, Mrs. Barbara McCorquodale and Mrs. Gerald Legge, have for long been open best-sellers.

Lately a benevolent bookseller gave a banquet in honour not only of these two ladies but of a third: the mother of one and the grandmother of the other, named Mrs. Polly Cartland. To The McCorquodale Story and The Legge Show, already familiar to millions, is thus now added The Cartland Story.



The impresario of the trilogy is Mrs. McC. (Barbara C.), who has written a book called *Polly: My Wonderful Mother* (Herbert Jenkins, 15s., worth more).

Polly, we read in its pages, herself had a Wonderful Mother, who not only enjoyed "exquisite feet and ankles" but was "not the sort of girl to be kissed under the stairs." She had also a Wonderful Grandfather, "exceedingly good-looking with fine chiselled features, bright blue eyes, fair curly hair and side-whiskers"; a Wonderful Great-Uncle, who invented the V.C.; a Wonderful Father, "an outstandingly good dancer," who climbed Mont Blanc; and a Wonderful Uncle, who was Champion Archer of England. Wonderful Polly had dancing brown eyes and an irresistible charm, moreover "the gift of looking smart in a silk petticoat." She was also a good fast bowler, and once took five wickets in a match.



Loved in turn by one of the most attractive men in the county (Worcs.), "red-haired and devastatingly good-looking," and by a Scotsman with "that indefinable look of being a gentleman," she finally married Bertie, "six foot tall, good-looking, with light blue eyes which always seemed to have a twinkle in them, and exceedingly smart"—also with his own private hansom.

After a "ripping year" or so of marriage, Barbara, the future Mrs. McC., was born, with, as she (Mrs. McC.) writes, "very well-shaped legs and feet," destined moreover to be "very pretty, being tall with fair hair, greenish eyes and a very clear pink-and-white complexion," and to enjoy "an instantaneous success" at Bembridge. While her brother said "I shall be Prime Minister," Barbara said "I shall get to know everybody—everybody in London."

She got to know Hugo, "charming and an outstandingly good dancer"; Pingo, the son of a baronet; Peter, "good-looking, very rich"; and, after refusing forty-five other proposals, she married a Mr. McCorquodale, only son of an "enormously wealthy father," then another Mr. McCorquodale, "quiet, charming and one of the finest game shots in England." She also wrote fifty-eight best-sellers, from *A Virgin in Mayfair* to *Escape from Passion*, from *Again This Rapture* to *Love Me For Ever*, together with a quantity of letters to her Wonderful Mum: "angelicest, rippingest . . . so utterly splendid . . . marvellous."

Meanwhile a Wonderful Daughter was born, a "lovely child," christened Raine, much as her half-brother was



later christened Glen and the heroine of *The Kiss of the Devil* (Hutchinson, 10s. 6d.) Skye. At the age of one she was blessed by the Kiss of Princess Elizabeth and the remark "What a lovely fat baby!" Nine months later, "with great aplomb and pose (*sic*)," she presented a bouquet to the Duchess of York. Later still, "growing prettier every year," she rose to be "one of the most beautiful girls in England," with "a sweet, gentle, friendly nature combined with a lot of real intelligence." As such she became *Débutante* of the Year and was married to Mr. Legge, "extremely clever, charming and rich," moreover the son of a Chief Constable and the heir to an Earl.

Lynette, the prize *débutante* of *Blue Heather* (Rich and Cowan, 6s.)—"She was lovely, she had glamour, she had a figure which rivalled the measurements of any professional model, and she had a social background. What girl could ask for more?"—wanted only to marry a "catch" and be "front page news." Raine, on the other hand, won a gold medal for oratory. "A fearless and outspoken critic," her Brains are for ever in 'Trust for the People in general and the City Council of Westminster in particular.

They know that she believes in Love ("Not only sex love, but love of children or a little kitten or humanity"); the Conservative Party (Sir Anthony Eden is not only "one of the best-looking men in England to-day" but has "perfect integrity and perfect manners, and these are the things that count most with a man"); British fashions (Mr. Hartnell—"he does make you feel heavenly"—has done "so much to improve our national taste" and so of course to raise our spiritual values); also showing the flag, preventing school-children from singing dirty songs, and keeping the tea-cups clean at London Airport.

So now here they are in the flesh, this Wonderful Trio symbolic of all that is best in English county life, all three of them posed in a glare of lights before four hundred banqueters, fourteen photographers and a round half-dozen McCorquodales. Mrs. McC. in blue (royal) with five rows of pearls, Mrs. L. in red (tomato and salmon) with two, both poodle-curved and plumed like high-stepping thoroughbreds, face up to the public ordeal without flinching,



having proved their mettle before. Mrs. C. in black (discreet), with four rows of pearls and a choker, faces it for the first time with similar fortitude, being made of similar stuff.

Other Wonderful Mums sit flanking them—a portrait painter with his, a TV announcer with hers. A Wonderful Viscount ("terribly good-looking," with a "beautiful smile" which always got him "all the votes he needed") has come "all the way from Worcestershire" to introduce them ("a pretty example of heredity . . . scintillating femininity . . . sterling attributes"). Then in turn they rise to talk of themselves and each other.

Mrs. McC. explains that she has written the book, "a Cavalcade of the

Century," not only with her pen but with her heart: "She lit in all of us a flame to do well . . . We die and are buried but the English people go on." Mrs. L.: "As long as we have such wonderful grandmothers England will always set an example to the rest of the civilized world." Mrs. C.: "I'm not wonderful, but I have a wonderful family."

Toasts are drunk from empty glasses. The impressed but not so wonderful banqueters feel like crying "Three cheers for the Red, Black and Blue!" But the toastmaster forestalls them, putting an authoritative end to the proceedings. With a sigh and a tear they turn away. Soon the Wonderful Mummery is but a memory.

Tips for the Tour

By VIC VALENTINE

Memo from Lord Merebrookham to
Editor, *Lagos Echo*

RELATIONS between Royalty and the Press are, as you guessed, far more complicated than might appear on the surface and, as owner of a group of Empire-minded newspapers, I have always given this problem my particular personal attention. Before we get to the more tricky subject of what to print and what not to print about the Royal couple, there are a few conventions which must be observed by any loyal newspaper.

For a start, of course, the Queen will always look *Radiant*. That is, unless you or one of your more discerning reporters decide that she is looking *Drawn and Tired*, probably from attend-

ing too many functions to which you yourself have not been invited.

In this case, lead off with a solicitous piece about undue strain on the Queen, and alert all your reporters to keep a close eye on any small signs and gestures indicative of fatigue, such as sudden pallor, sustained closing of the eyes or the passing of the back of the hand across the brow.

Your reporters will discover these signs even though they will be missed by your rival newspapers. Their reporters will probably swear they did not occur. That will not matter. It is these human touches which build circulation.

Remember too that every picture tells a story, particularly a Royal story. On the same day you decide the Queen is

being asked to do too much, sort carefully through the seventy-odd photographs which your photographers will have taken of the Royal couple and pick out those few which show the Queen in an unflattering or unsmiling pose. Publish these.

Other points to remember are that the Queen, by night, dressed in an elaborate State gown, looks *Regal*, whereas, by day, she is always a picture of *Simple Dignity*.

You will be constantly wondering in print at how *Cool and Young* she looks under the blazing Nigerian sunshine.

In respect to the subject matter of these Royal stories, one cardinal principle must be followed. Anything may be printed about the Royal family—provided only that it is fulsome, trivial or prying enough.

Don't on any account be alarmed if these stories are untrue. If a story is untrue you are more likely to have it as a world exclusive—until your rivals bring out their second editions, that is.

From long experience in Fleet Street we know that Buckingham Palace cannot deny these stories without a certain loss of dignity.

Although well-meant, I thought your observation about not wanting the *Echo* to sound like pages from Crawfie's Memoirs somewhat naive.

To be quite blunt, all of us are Crawfies, and Crawfieism has been rampaging to and fro between Fleet Street and the end of The Mall for decades before the Accession.

The only difference is that the Queen's unfortunate governess has had to operate on a comparatively small scale, and no one is safe from criticism unless he or she is doing things on the largest scale possible, as the national papers do.

Although your readers will want to know every passing remark of the Queen's, such as "Isn't it a lovely day," or "Thank you very much" (give these remarks in full as if they were Wildean epigrams), concentrate above all else on Underwear Journalism.

This term will explain itself when I tell you how it was coined some years ago in the Athenæum Club. Lord Carverdale bet me he could put a cool 100,000 readers on to his circulation



overnight, merely by printing a full description of the pattern and design of the Duke of Edinburgh's underpants.

Despite the X-ray eyes of the Fleet Street ladies which seem to be able to penetrate from Fleet Street to the private apartments and discover such fascinating trivia as what snacks they eat, what books they are reading, what soap they wash with and whether the Duke still wears polka dot pyjamas, this sole remaining fact has eluded us all up to date. The bet still stands.

Your women reporters should already be hard at it forecasting what the Queen will wear during the tour.

The mere fact that the Queen's clothes are hush-hush until she is actually seen wearing them will not stop your staff from writing accurate previews by cunning use of the alternative approach.

Something like this for instance: "The Queen will wear a small head-hugging hat during the Royal Progress to-morrow unless the sun is blazing too fiercely for her soft English complexion. In that case she will wear a summer hat with a wide brim."

Other articles suggest themselves, such as: she is not being allowed to see the *real* Nigeria; that she is meeting too many—or too few (depending on your own views of the colour bar) coloured Nigerians; that some officials (who have been fools enough to fall foul of you in the past) are hogging the whole show.

Before concluding this letter I must touch on a more delicate aspect of Royal reportage. There will be times when the Queen and Prince Philip conduct their business in a way you cannot fully approve. This must be made known. I am not for a minute suggesting you should be disloyal or unpatriotic. Your readers would not stand this for a minute, and, after all, an editor's first duty is towards his newspaper's circulation.

But there are certain well-tryed Fleet Street devices for voicing your disapproval which will establish your paper as a patriotic forthright journal—and do wonders for its circulation.

Direct your criticism not at the Royal couple but at their advisers or the organizers of the tour. I have hit out hard and often over the years, blaming the Queen's advisers for everything—extravagances in the Royal households,



"Still, there's one consolation—we'll be nearer London."

poor pay to staffs, mediaeval conditions below-stairs and too much preoccupation with the old diehard aristocracy.

I never stop thundering at these miserable creatures who shut the Queen off from her people and refuse to let her live a normal life.

Of course I do not refer to any specific individuals. Indeed I should find it hard to know which individuals were concerned, or even if there are any. But the technique is a useful one.

Another even more flamboyant method is to put the story across by denying it.

By this means you can accuse Royalty of every crime in the book with impunity, but make your language strong so everyone knows where you stand. "We are in a position to deny categorically a foul rumour being spread by vile gossip-mongers," you will begin indignantly.

It might be any of a score of

preposterous stories: that the Duke has had too much to drink, that he is a speed-maniac, or even that the Queen tried to push a local chieftain off a gasometer.

After giving a few corroborative details (i.e. the Duke was certainly seen to stagger on leaving the airport but that was merely because his foot slipped) you will thunder on against the rumour-mongers.

It matters not that no one will ever have heard of the rumour until you denied it so vehemently. Your readers will have heard an interesting, though unfounded, item of scandal, Royal honour is vindicated and your own position is impregnable.

If a Royal press relations officer issues a denial later, all the better. He will be doing just what you have done. Only you will have been first.

If you pay careful attention to all I have written your fortune will begin piling up.

MEREBROOKHAM



"Trouble is, we can't even enter it for the Architecture Section of the Summer Academy."

Half an Hour in China

By J. B. BOOTHROYD

MR. HU had seemed a little reserved when I first telephoned the Embassy. I quite understood. Relatively new to London diplomatic life, Chairman Mao Tse-tung's representatives naturally lean towards a touch of native inscrutability when breezy strangers ring up with a demand to be shown over a Chinese typewriter. I think Mr. Hu's first impulse, as a matter of fact, was to deny the existence of any such thing, but his better nature, or his concern for Communism's cultural prestige, got the better of him. He finally admitted that there was a Chinese typewriter. As to my seeing it, he would have to inquire, and let me know.

A week passed. No doubt the line to Peking was busy. I was abandoning the typewriter, and planning instead to write about China's obstructionist attitude to Western journalists, when the summons unexpectedly came. Soon Mr. Hu was welcoming me over the threshold of the People's Republic with

an immensely cordial grip of his small, cold hand, and leading the way to a sitting-room of spacious comfort not the least overdone. There was nothing to show that I was in China; nothing Chinese at all, except Mr. Hu and the cigarette he gave me. No portrait of the Chairman. It was warm. I said so, removing my coat. "But not, I trust, stuffy?" said Mr. Hu, springing up in some anxiety, prepared to smash a window if my comfort required it. His English was fluent, but often favoured an upward, interrogative cadence, so that I was not always certain whether he was being agreeable or sceptical. We opened with the weather. I said that in England a cold morning sometimes became a warm afternoon. "Yes?" said Mr. Hu.

"I read the other day," I told him, conscious that my pause had been too short, but anxious to place the visit on a rational footing, "that your newspapers are now to be printed left to right, instead of top to bottom."

"Yes?"

"And I somehow got to wondering about Chinese typewriters. I thought I'd like to see one."

He asked if I spoke Chinese, and I said "No." I may even have said "No?" It seemed a good time to learn. After all, as I understood the language it was quite simple. Just a lot of pictures. A child could read it. In fact the only thing that I found really puzzling about Chinese was its system of dealing with proper names. It's obviously easy enough to draw a picture meaning a house or a tree or a mountain, but to draw one meaning John Foster Dulles or Llandudno is another matter. I put this to Mr. Hu, and he said that that too was simple. You just wrote down the pictures of the sounds in the name. He obligingly demonstrated on my own, and it came out at five pictures, swift, intricate and neat, with what looked like an expensive American fountain-pen. I asked what it meant. "Nothing," he said. There

was no context. A character's meaning is governed by the characters around it. I pressed him, so he studied my Chinese name again to oblige me, and found in it Cloth, True, Low, Virtue and Ism. "Ism?" I said. Mr. Hu gestured. "Capitalism? Communism?" He gave me an affable little nudge, and chuckled. "Toryism?"

But a proper gravity returned as he described the plan for simplifying the language, a plan of which the horizontal printing of newspapers is only a beginning. Apparently it can do with simplifying, after all. There are characters involving as many as twenty-three separate strokes of brush or pen. These will be reduced to as few as three. There are more than a thousand different characters all meaning the same thing and having the same sound. They will go. The innumerable dialects will be reduced to one. It struck me that there would be room for other improvements. For instance, most of the "pictures" aren't pictures at all; they may be merely devices to represent abstract ideas, to express nothing more than the spoken sound of the idea to be conveyed. Many characters look different and have different meanings, but are phonetically indistinguishable; there are, for instance, several dozen words pronounced *shih*, but with meanings as delightfully varied as Lion, Beginning, Poetry, House and Corpse. Absolute lucidity is hard to be sure of, and a hasty translation of Confucius's "Oppressive government is fiercer than a tiger" could easily end up instead with something about nagging wives or the high cost of fish, leaving the Confucian worse confounded. Again, many of the characters look pretty much alike even when they aren't: the standard dictionary of the Emperor K'ang Hsi listed about forty-nine thousand of them, so similarities were bound to creep in; moreover, there must have been additions lately, to fill the need for such modern expressions as Agricultural Producers' Co-operatives, or Imperialist Bureaucrat-Capitalist. In fact, as I said to Mr. Hu, it was a wonder that after five thousand years of this some pruning and revision hadn't been done before. (I was glad that I said this, because it gave him an opportunity to whip in his commercial: "The political and economic unity of China demands the adoption of a

universal national language.") The language has virtually no grammar, which must be a boon to Chinese school-children; but it also has absolutely no alphabet, which must be a headache for Chinese typists.

Brought full circle in this way Mr. Hu led me out into the hall. The typewriter stood on a table, decently draped with a white cloth. Ordinarily its place was on the Embassy's fifth floor, but that was a long way for me to have to go, he explained. Here was characteristic courtesy—though in fact I shouldn't at all have minded trailing up there, all among the secret documents and military appreciations.

Mr. Hu stepped forward and removed the cloth.

"Chinese typewriter?" he announced.

In a way, it was a bit of an anticlimax. I had expected something between a hand-loom and a linen-press, but the thing was obviously of the genus typewriter by the platen, familiarly black and smooth and cylindrical, though fatter than those of the West. There was no keyboard. Instead, in the base of the machine, a packed tray of tiny square rubber stamps—about five thousand characters. Over them hung a beaked arm, movable in all directions, unresisting, like the steering-wheel in a car with the front jacked up. "But

how?" I said. "Simple to work," said Mr. Hu. He took the arm and hovered like a cormorant over the rich shoal beneath, then banged it down. The beak snatched up a fish, smacked it on the paper, threw it back in its place. "Quite simple?" said Mr. Hu. I peered at the printed impression and asked what it said. "Nothing," said Mr. Hu. Of course, no context.

With permission, I typed a word or two. It might have meant anything. Or nothing. After that the occasion seemed virtually over. Two points struck me. One was that Chinese typists won't be greatly worried by the new horizontalization policy—it's simply a matter of feeding the paper in sideways; the other, that tracking down the right word out of those five thousand, all tiny, similar and backwards, must make life in a Chinese typing-pool a long series of pregnant silences. I put this to Mr. Hu. He shrugged it aside. Naturally, he said, they had to learn where they all were. Moreover, there were several other trays, interchangeable according to the nature of the document under transcription . . .

As I stepped back on to British soil he asked me to let him have a copy of the article. He said it might make his typist laugh. I hope it will. I can't think of a more deserving case.



Interview

By CLAUD COCKBURN

PROBABLY nobody knows, and certainly nobody cares, when the first newspaper interview with somebody appeared, but what *is* known is that, whenever it was, it was a snoring bore. This may be stated with confidence by anyone who has ever either conducted or read an interview with anyone, and what makes this an important statement, having a lot of relevance to the problems of our Age, is that just when even the newspapers were beginning to realize that the whole of that sort of caper is a tedious farce, the radio and TV people come bouncing on to the scene full of the notion that what's so intensely interesting, bringing a very, very real sense of reality to the hearers and viewers, is a man with a microphone and camera recording the fact that the Prime Minister of somewhere is confidently of the opinion that the sun rises in the east and that if everyone loved everyone else there possibly would be less war. Pressed, he will state—after a bit of harrumphing—that the earth is sort of roundish and goes round the sun.

The only serious evidence that the Victorians were not entirely right in their heads is the way they accepted, and even encouraged, the interview situation. Famous Henri de Blowitz, tip-top *Times* man, records the immense

trouble he put himself to for the purpose of interviewing Abdul Hamid, at that time Sultan of Turkey. He got it fixed in the end, and the Sultan agreed to take an hour or so off between a massacre and a fraudulent bankruptcy to state for publication that what he was, if you understood him aright, was more or less of a liberal progressive, keen to get democracy going in Turkey, although not of course too fast, because people need to be educated up to their responsibilities, etc., etc., etc.

In fact it had pretty nearly everything that every interview with statesman or ruling figure has, and the only wonder was that de Blowitz was able to justify his expense account. However, he did, and the horrid consequence was that for years after that, young men rushing into journalism thought it quite a cap-feather to "secure"—that was the word used—an interview with some beat-up politico who could no longer find anyone to believe a word he said except the British newspaper-reading public.

Many interviewers went to the length of describing their particular blend of tedium and lie as "Exclusive." After a time, however, the public began to rumble the fact that "Exclusive" interviews are exclusive because the man who gives the interview has so many skeletons in his cupboard that he dare

not face more than one newspaperman at a time for fear he'll let one of them crash out.

In this connection—in case you aim for your boy to enter upon this career—keep firmly in mind that in point of fact an interview can be made to look "Exclusive" even if your part in it was to sit at the back of the room behind the men from the *Daily Herald* and *Time*, dodging about trying to see what type of socks the film-star, Foreign Minister, or prominent murderer was wearing. Don't let this worry you in the least. "Chatting relaxedly in his luxury hotel suite in West Kilburn yesterday, Abdul Hamid (or Bobo Stinker or whoever it may be) outlined his plans for the future of democracy (or Shakespeare on skis or whatever it may be) while characteristically holding a cigarette between two fingers of his right hand and occasionally setting it between his lips and drawing smoke through it. I thought to myself 'If a man in his position, with his very, very special problems, can speak of democracy while calmly smoking a cigarette, is there anything seriously wrong with this world of ours?'"

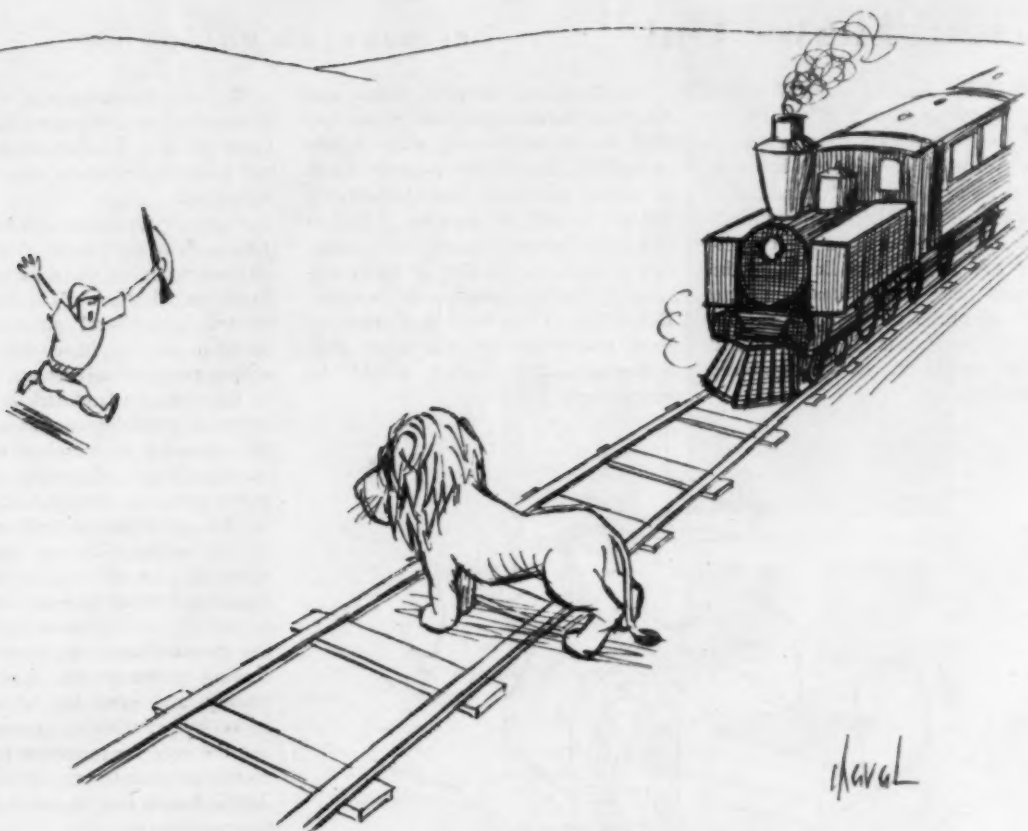
The point here is simply to give the impression that this fellow—whom you don't know and don't like, and maybe he doesn't like you either—was alone in the room with you, taking his hair down and talking intimate. And just how simply simple it is you can ascertain by glancing from time to time at the Sunday newspapers. What's the percentage in mentioning that there were two hundred other journalists there at the time and that wasn't his hair really being taken down but a new pulley arrangement worked out by his press agent?

It did look at one time as though—because even newspapers catch on some time—we were going to be able to say good-bye to all that.

But just as hope burgeoned, the radio and television killed it. Fresh as daisies, they loved an interview the way old Blowitz loved it when the world was young.

And this is Jakes-Jakes, our reporter at London Airport, who has had a talk with the last President but three of Argentina.





The ex-President then states that he likes England and is personally a good man. He makes clear that he is not up to anything—such as a comeback—but is happy to have time to catch up on his back reading. The only way you can tell that in reality he popped over here to try to borrow some money to buy some guns with which to shoot up the current incumbent is when he says "My only regret is that owing to the unseasonable season I have not been able to see your cricket. As President my motto was always 'Straight Bat and Play Up the Game.'"

Things have got so that you hardly know whether what you are hearing or looking at is Wilfred Pickles interviewing the oldest inhabitant or an M.P. asking the King of Saudi Arabia whether he believes in democracy. All the interviewers say the same thing. There is something about an interview which reduces everyone to exactly the same level, and if Napoleon were on the air to-day he would say "Well, d'you know, I didn't exactly want to be

Emperor. Bit of a tough job y'know, and not much overtime pay. It all just sort of—happened. See what I mean? I mean what I wanted was more or less a sort of—well, I suppose you'd call it democracy. But here's Mr. Dulles who'll tell you a lot more about that."

The listeners and viewers haven't revolted yet, and the best bet is that it will be the interviewed people who will be the first finally to pack it in.

"Well now, sir, do you propose to submit your country's claim to the United Nations?"

"Not till I hear how the logs roll. The way I hear it, that Peruvian *bloc* wants too much and gives too little."

"Oh, quite. Well, I mean I suppose that's a point of view. Now would it be fair to say that you personally favour peace rather than war?"

"Certainly not. The only way that ridiculous notion got around was because we didn't have the guns it's going to take to blow those S.O.B.s out of where they are."

"Well of course I, and I'm sure everyone in Britain, does understand that you feel a little hot under the collar. I take it your view is, then, that 'parity' in armaments is a *sine qua non* of international amity?"

"Come again, kid."

"Well, I mean you feel, I assume, that you—properly armed—could more effectively support the principles of the United Nations?"

"Properly armed? Listen, properly armed—and if there's a millionaire in the house will he please come up here right away—properly armed we'd give those fellows a bashing they'd never forget."

"What about paragraph 11 of the 1924 Agreement?"

"You can have it."

"But of course you, as I understand it, have a very, very sharp awareness of the sanctity of international contracts?"

"Sure. We'll give the so-and-so's the works just as soon as we can buy shooting irons. Those ———"

"Owing to a technical hitch . . ."

Russia Thaws Out

By BERNARD HOLLOWOOD

EVERY economist in the West will rejoice to hear that the Soviet Institute of Economics (a branch of the Academy of Sciences) has now ordered its members to "discard their dogmatic and over-simplified approach to the study of contemporary capitalism." Led by Marshal Bulganin, the reformers are urging teachers and writers to praise the achievements of Western economists and to brand Marxist text-books as "dangerously anti-Marxist."

The change had to come. British and American economists have never lost faith in themselves, in their highly specialized, necessarily esoteric mode of verbal communication (mistakenly dubbed jargon), or in their ability to find gainful employment in the so-called dismal science. Reviled or misunderstood by their own people, our Keyneses, Beveridges, Crowthers and Harrods have always known that some day, somewhere, their work would be appreciated.

We invited a number of well-known economists to comment—at standard rates—on the Russian announcement, and a selection of the replies received is appended.

From Prof. Prince Blutner of the University of California: "The change of heart is almost certainly inspired by President Eisenhower's wise handling of the agricultural situation. His decision to subsidize farmers who abstain from raising corn and hogs must be considered a landmark in economic progress, a development as pregnant as the discovery of marginal utility, the quantity theory of money, purchasing power parity or income tax.

"The principle can easily be adapted to harmonize with the new Soviet five-year plan of Siberian expansion. Negative farming increases the area of potentially productive land, strengthens the statistical stockpile, raises the purchasing power of the farming community, and saves the tax-payer vast sums by eliminating unemployment and the need for monetary relief. It is no exaggeration to say that the whole of Asiatic Russia may be scheduled within the next few years."

From Dr. H. L. T. MacGarnett, London School of Economics: "Naturally I am delighted. The Russians are beginning to see the value of our theoretical work on inflation and wage differentialism, and if they become sufficiently involved there should be no danger of atomic warfare for many, many years.

"Our brand of inflation, which helps the wage-earner at the expense of the salaried and *rentier* groups, and tends to wipe out the *bourgeoisie*, may not be in line with current Soviet ideology, but it is associated with many notions that should prove useful to the economic determinists of the Moscow Institute. For example, it can be demonstrated with equal cogency that taxes are both inflationary and deflationary, that a country is overpopulated and in need of more people, that war is ruinous and the mother of prosperity; and as we all know, equivocation can usually be relied on to keep the toiling masses quiet and toiling.

"Yes, Ivan should be grateful to the L.S.E."



"Er . . . Timber."

From S. Duke Ginsberg, author of "Footnotes to the Theory of Consumer Propensity": "As I see it, Russia is gradually moving away from the Leninist doctrine of 'capital accumulation priority,' spending less on heavy industry and producer durables and more on consumer or retail goods. Russian soldiers in Satellite Europe and Messrs. Khrushchev and Bulganin in India and Burma have seen for themselves that people can be induced to work by the promise of more food, clothing, cigarettes, TV, nylons, home-perm-sets and football pools; and they look to Western economists to point the way towards increased production.

"Hitherto the Japs have been regarded as pre-eminent in the field of industrial plagiarism, but from now on I expect to see Russia in the lead. The output of ejector-type electric toasters in the Kiev-Kharkov zone is planned to rise by 80,760 per cent in 1957, and Georgia has undertaken the task of stepping-up the production of cowboy outfits and bubble gum by 258,750 per cent.

"In the circumstances it is comforting to know that most U.S. exports are covered by Federal patents."

From Joan Herbison, Reader in Applied Econometrics to the Third Programme: "The elasticity of the marginal Real Demand Function is, as it were, a product of the employment multiplier and aggregate prime-cost. As Schumpenfelt (that 'Central European swot' as Keynes called him) has pointed out, primary non-wage-goods presuppose above-the-line off-shore commitments in the shape of disutility adjustments and non-scheduled retained imports, and as such cannot be explained in terms of surplus long-period capital disinvestment coupled with a falling birth-rate. It is mere wishful thinking to contend that the compounded variables of quasi or minimal producer-preference constitute a state of 'sound finance,' and it is to be hoped that profit-equilibrium, as defined by Professor Cargill, will never be confused with the dubious conception of the liquidity-supply transfer-bonus as postulated in Meers' *Treatise on Obsolescence*.

"It follows that I am simply thrilled with the penumbral ambivalence of Russia's sixth five-year plan and the dramatic *démarche* of the Soviet Institute of Economics."



The Language of Flowers

A Handbook for Victorian Lovers

I SENT my love clematis. She, walking white
In her garden, reading Rossetti, veiled her sight
Under blue eyelids, blushingly comprehended
Her mental beauty was thereby commended.

My love sent me the bud of a white rose
To say her heart knew naught of love. Repose
Fled from my days; to tell her of my flame
I sent an iris. Swift her answer came.

She had gathered mouse-eared chickweed, flowers which swear
Ingenuous simplicity. Despair
Seized me, I sent gum cistus, saying "To-morrow
I die." She sent me yew, expressing sorrows.

True to my word I died; and to my tomb
She mourning came. Her hat was all abloom
With rosemary, which vows not to forget,
And rue, to tell the world of her regret.

But when upon my grave my life, my dove,
Stooped to plant myrtle, signifying love,
Then garden daisies in my dust were bred,
And "Sweet, I share your sentiments," they said.

RANDOLPH STOW

Fashion at the Fishmongers'

THE invitation said that Lady Pamela Berry was At Home at Fishmongers' Hall. During her Presidency of the Society of London Fashion Designers, Lady Pamela has been at home in many mansions: Lancaster House, No. 11 Downing Street, the Mansion House itself. It is said that she has asked for, but been refused, The Tower.

It was not, in very truth, without misgiving that the Warden and Court of the Fishmongers' Company lent their stately hall in the City for such an unaccustomed rout. There was a stipulation that, for dignity's sake, no photographs should be taken of ladies with glasses in their hands. This had the effect of slowing things up considerably at the beginning of the party; but the Prime Warden of the Fishmongers', himself having a whale of a time, relented. From then on, the camera men were given carte blanche to do their candidest.

The reception is held at the close of the first day of the London *couture* collections. The conscientious fashion critic has seen four dress shows during the day. She has sat for some six long hours on hard gilt chairs in vitiated *salons*, and appraised at least two hundred models. She has spent lunch-time in writing of the morning shows, tea-time in writing of the afternoon

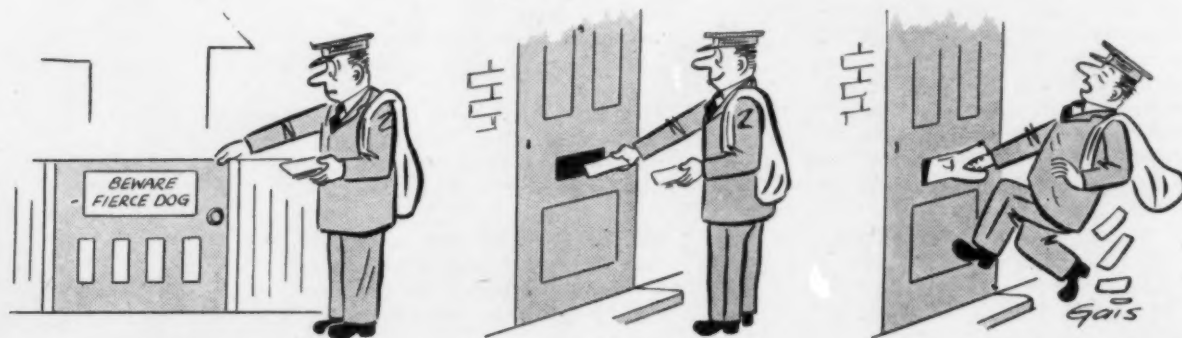
ones, and has later dispatched some thousand winged words from Fleet Street. By the time she has made Fishmongers' Hall, she has passed through the phase when hunger and fatigue hurt, and attained the blessedness of insensible exhaustion. In this happy state of semi-anæsthesia it takes but one glass of champagne to give meaning to the meaningless, significance to the nuance.

There is, for instance, the rumour that someone is wearing a mink-lined mackintosh, and this seems enormously significant. But, alas, although the lining is mink, the mackintosh turns out to be a pure white satin coat, with buttons of genuine diamonds and amethysts. This is not, it seems, going to be one of those wonderful evenings when rumours come true. Nevertheless, the legend of the Mink-lined Mac lives on from mouth to mouth, gladdening the heart afresh each time one hears it. Intensely significant, also, seems the grouping in the further room, under the Annigoni portrait of the Queen. With our hostess is the President of the Board of Trade, the Minister of Pensions, the Minister of Housing, Miss Pat Hornsby Smith, and the Leader of the Opposition. What is Mr. Gaitskell doing on this Berry-go-round? But, again, truth is duller than rumour: Mr. Gaitskell is not, and never has been, a one-party

man. He adores parties of any kind, and goes to as many as he can.

And now the group is threatened by the advance of Mrs. Carmel Snow, queen of American *Harper's Bazaar* and the most powerful force in international fashion. When Mrs. Snow is expected at a dress show her throne is kept vacant and the performance held up until all hope of her arrival is abandoned. Occasionally she does arrive; and then her approval, or disapproval, is said to make, or break, the designer. Such is the legend and the build-up; quite unproven. And here she is herself, fragile almost to brittleness, but proven indestructible. A milliner's confection of white tulle conceals her hair, so that we do not know whether she has the blue rinse or the mauve this season. She is not wearing the dark glasses she often wears indoors as well as out. Can she see better without them, or worse? Or not at all? She is greeted, and the experienced hostess's eye runs speculatively round her immediate circle. To whom can she pass on this baby? The eye lights upon Mr. Gaitskell, innocently happy. The introduction is effected. Both Mr. Gaitskell and Mrs. Snow appear nonplussed. If only he would lead her to the red velvet seat our happiness would be complete.

But unfortunately the red velvet seat,



the photographer's set, is occupied. Hardy Amies and a fair Unknown are sitting in vivacious conversation under the arc-light. "I adored your collection, Hardy—quite out of this world!" "Too sweet of you, darling, but it was all a ghastly rush; nothing was finished, really." But surely that cannot be what they are saying, because Hardy Amies does not show his collection until Saturday. In our amnesia we are imagining things. We have heard that conversation before, many many times; we shall undoubtedly hear it again on Saturday; but we are not hearing it now. They are almost certainly just saying *cheese, cheese, cheese* to hold their smiles while the movie camera whirls.

Over by the entrance, a young man from the Design Centre in Manchester is saying "Here comes one of those clever continental raincoats, flung on for evening glamour." What actually comes is the Fashion Editress of the English *Harper's Bazaar* in a rose-red theatre coat, a rare *couturier's* piece. But what Manchester thinks to-day, London thinks to-morrow; and what the young man from Manchester said that moment was all round the room the next; the Hon. Mrs. Richey's clever raincoat came second only to the Mink-lined Mac as the symbol of the evening.

The chief purpose of the party is to entertain overseas visitors to London's fashion week. But we look in vain for the Editor-in-Chief of American *Vogue*; her warmer personality would redress the balance of Mrs. Snow—although, as always in high fashion places, there is the underlying chill, the vanilla ice under the hot chocolate sauce. However, we have with us our English Edition of *Vogue*, and we are very proud of her. In coffee-beige from tiny hat to tidy feet, she is perfectly co-ordinated, a credit to the old country.

Of the Americans who are present we feel the most affection for the cheerful blonde who is promoting beaver and chinchilla. In the morning we saw her at Worth's in a sky-blue beaver top-coat; in the afternoon, at Hartnell's, in a full-length grey chinchilla worth fifteen thousand pounds; and this evening she promotes upon her person a little Golden Crown chinchilla shrug. Whenever she is stroked she purrs. It was this same chinchilla lady who, coming out of Cavanagh's dress



"Darling, I'm not interested in a millionaire before tax."

show in the morning, had her dear little hat (dear in the sense of expensive) caught by the wind and blown into the road. "Aw, forget it," she called to those who would retrieve it, "I've got another."

It was, indeed, a windy week. Another hat blew off in Berkeley Square, a natural-coloured mushroom. It sailed over the railings into the Square garden, and settled on the grass looking as though it had grown there overnight. Said the gardener handing it back on a fork, "It's a fine big specimen, madam, for the cultivated variety." But then the gardeners of Berkeley Square are very fashion conscious. For it is in the streets leading into Berkeley Square that the designers have their *salons*. It is the equivalent of the Rond Point des Champs Elysées, but very, very different, as different as London clothes from Paris clothes: less uncompromisingly elegant, more nostalgically romantic.

The clothes we have seen in the London Spring and Summer Collections are harbingers of the London

spring and summer. And the collection which epitomizes all that is most charming in the London Season is that of Victor Stiebel. Without losing the recognizable touch of costly *couture* his clothes have youth and sparkle. The gardeners of Berkeley Square can look forward to flower-garden prints and shady hats with roses in full bloom; to pale suede shoes with pointed toes, and doeskin gloves as soft as petals. Tiny waists and temperate bosoms, swirling skirts and the tempestuous petticoat, parasols by day and star-strewn fascinators by night . . . the nods and becks and wreathed smiles of the most feminine fashions since Edwardian days will pass through Berkeley Square this summer. ALISON ADBURGHAM

"NEW SYSTEM FOR H-RAID WARNING
C. D. CHIEF TELLS OF RADIATION THREAT
PUBLIC WILL HAVE TO STAY INDOORS"

Headlines in *Daily Telegraph*

Bad as that, eh?



"McGraw Gallery? Dolan here. I think I've entered a new period."

In the City

By the Forelock

"IF you want to know the time, ask a policeman—he's almost certain to have a Swiss watch." In the 'thirties there would have been no doubt about it: the British watch industry was dead, and the Swiss enjoyed a virtual monopoly of time-keeping on wrists and in waistcoat pockets. But to-day our native horologists are back in production, an old and distinguished industry has been reborn and its output of watches and clocks is already up to nine million a year.

The craft of Thomas Tompion—like so many British crafts—languished because those who directed its fortunes lacked the will to convert it into an industry. Seventy years ago watch-making was transformed by the neo-technic revolution: machine methods, standardization and quantity production principles put the simple craftsman out of business and enabled manufacturers in Switzerland, Germany and the United States to establish new factory industries. British watches could not compete in price with Swiss imports, their production declined rapidly and during the 'thirties came to a stop. The mainspring had gone.

It was during the war that the full effects of the loss became apparent. We needed aviation clocks, timing mechanisms in great variety for the armaments industry, more watches, and more workers trained in the production of delicate precision instruments; and in spite of the efforts of Smith's, who ticked over at a commendable lick, the shortage of timepieces could only be made good by large shipments from the U.S.A.

The new industry was established ten years ago with Government support and a 33½ per cent import duty backed by a strict quota system, and has made excellent progress. Factory output of clocks and watches is now valued at about £11 millions per annum, and retail orders on the home market are worth nearly three times as much as the

trade in imported pieces. But without adequate protection the infant industry would soon be swamped by long-established competitors, and it will be some years before British clocks and watches can stand on their own pins. Britain is now producing four million watches a year: Switzerland thirty-four million. And the Swiss, with such deservedly popular trade-marks as Rolex, Longines, Cyma and Rotary, are improving their output, quality and efficiency at a remarkable rate.

In world markets there is an enormous effective and potential demand for watches and clocks. Africans, Asiatics and Latin Americans all want to know the time of day and are eager to buy cheap chronometers in vast quantities. But they must be cheap.

The British horological industry is in good hands and has an excellent chance

of winning a useful slice of world trade. If the progress of the last ten years can be maintained, if costs do not get completely out of hand, if Smith's, Timex, Ingersoll, Newmark and other manufacturers can find the necessary labour and capital for efficient expansion—then the universal fame of Big Ben may eventually be equalled at wrist and mantelpiece level by the products of this revitalized industry.

Investors prepared to take a long shot might do worse than take time by the forelock. With guaranteed Government support, a steady home demand for something like ten million timepieces a year, the probability of dramatic success through the development of automation, and virtually unlimited scope for trade overseas, the chances of failure are remote and hopes of blossoming profitability are high.

MAMMON



In the Country

Crazy—but it Works

I MEAN no disrespect to any of my neighbours when I say that agriculture will soon be running into very serious difficulties because there are so few gentlemen among us. As any history of English agriculture will reveal, all the innovations and experiments have always been made by that most maligned class known as the gentleman farmer. It is they alone, from Turnip Townsend to the present Earl of Portsmouth, who have pushed agriculture along. Without such experimenters and enthusiasts wasting their patrimony with hare-brained ideas, we farmers would still be ploughing with oxen and killing off our stock at the beginning of winter.

A retired Indian colonel who paid too much for a derelict Wiltshire farm, to run as a hobby, introduced the grass drier. It was a Mayfair playboy who brought the first batch of Ayrshire cows down from Scotland, and who amused himself by cutting his grass when the weather was set wet, and then burying it all in a pit to make silage.

I watched his neighbours, all good yeoman farmers, jeer at his folly. Ten years later they started following his example and are still profiting by it, though he bankrupted himself over his enthusiasm for farming, and now serves behind one of the bars in Jermyn Street which he used to frequent.

It wasn't the war itself which gave agriculture such impetus fifteen years ago but the influx of these novices to farming. The whole pattern in the countryside to-day is a result of their amateurish doodling. How much marrow stem kale, which you now see in every other field, was grown before they introduced it? The young idiot who first started artificial insemination has returned to the City, but better beef now grazes. And I remember twenty years ago watching a friend of mine wasting his time and money fixing up a wire to a car battery to fence pigs in. A whole village laughed at him, and somebody else eventually patented the gadget to his profit.

But the gentlemen returned to their professions soon after the end of the war. Since then agriculture has just stood still. It will soon be lagging behind again unless we get another injection from Poona or Belgravia. But I dare say Singapore will do.

RONALD DUNCAN

Anything for a Laugh

"SIGNALMAN MISSING BY MISTAKE
PASSENGERS DIVERTED"

The Scotsman



WHAT a tragedy it is that Mr. Asquith is no longer Prime Minister—or at the least Leader of the Opposition! Mr. Asquith, even when he had something to say, compressed it into a few minutes of memorable phrase. Mr. Gaitskell seems to be bringing to the House the technique of saying nothing for an hour and ten minutes in a rigmarole of clichés. The shape of the curtain-raising debate was clear enough. The Government had been inept in not explaining what had happened about the private export of scrap—and on the other hand that private export had not made any serious difference to the balance of force in the Middle East. So Sir Walter Monckton stuck very narrowly to the White Paper and refused to discuss even Government export of arms, let alone the general foreign situation.

Mr. Gaitskell, on the other hand, finding little to say on the original scrap question, took the chance to roam at large over the general field of Middle Eastern policy. But he found nothing to say that had not already been said in the debate before Christmas. He complained that there was a difference between the Prime Minister and the late Foreign Secretary whether a balance of arms should be preserved in the Middle East. But every one knew that six weeks ago. Even Mr. Herbert Morrison had heard the news. Mr. Selwyn Lloyd had no difficulty in showing that all Mr. Gaitskell's practical suggestions had already been tried and found useless, and Mr. Stokes from distant Cairo commented that

Mr. Gaitskell's exposition "might mislead." As far as policy goes, honours between the two Front Benches were even at nought-all.

It is admittedly far from easy to say what Middle Eastern policy should be, but that does not alter the fact that no one has at present got a policy and that without policy things are drifting rapidly to a catastrophe—or, as perhaps Talleyrand might have put it, to worse than a catastrophe, to a conference.



Members wished that Arabs would agree with Israelis and that Americans would agree with British. Mr. Crossman, who knows a thing or two, knows what the Highland Light Infantry did at Salisbury and what Nuri Said is preparing to do in the Middle East. Mr. Amery said that we must now concentrate on the points that were of importance to us and, even if we skedaddled from Suez, he was glad to find us holding at Buraimi.

Mr. Alfred Robens complained that "the British Council calmly announced that on a Wednesday at seven o'clock there would be a gramophone recital entitled Instruments of the Orchestra; No. 3. The Harpsichord, by a Mr. Tidmarsh." But what a sensible thing to do! It is the only sensible thing that we have heard of anybody doing in the Middle East for so long a time. Who would have thought that Mr. Robens was one of those who when he heard anyone speak of culture felt for his safety-catch? Mr. George Thomas even went so far as to refer to the subject under debate, but of any suggestion of a hope—even indeed of a possibility—of Israel-Arab agreement there was no hint. Mrs. Braddock, that most splendid of women, herself a tank and every inch a tank, alone was undaunted. What could be the unbalanced balance which she, by being exported, could not restore

And in these confines with a monarch's voice

Cry "Braddock" and let slip the dogs of war?

Should nice girls be stenographers?
And should nice men be Home

Secretaries? It really must be so much pleasanter not being Home Secretary than being it that one wonders why Major Lloyd George goes on. It has been proved again and again that nowhere is such obstinate reaction found as in the inheritor of a radical tradition and a radical name. But, even if everything else is to stop still where it was in 1885, prices have not stayed put, and Mr. de Freitas, Mr. Rees-Davies and most of the House did not see why, if everyone else's remuneration was on the up and up, the innocent victims of a miscarriage of justice should not get a rise as well.

But Wednesday, a memorable day, was a day for greater things. Housing Subsidies (Committee) in the House of Commons. But who cared about them? "He hasn't got a clue," chanted Dame Irene Ward from the Government back benches at the hinder quarters of Mr. Duncan Sandys. Who even cared when Mr. Paul Williams, anxious for the safety of our road crossings and with all the weight of Sunderland upon his shoulders, impressed upon the Minister of Transport "the importance of having pedestrians fairly lit up at

night"? Wednesday's child was full of joy, and all roads that day led to the Lords to see "our trusty and well-beloved Clement," introduced by Earl Baldwin and the Earl of Huntingdon, take his seat as the last Earl of England. What a task for the descendant of Robin Hood—

Blow the horn of Huntingdon from Scotland to the sea.

We learnt that Her Majesty "by our mere motion" had called trusty Clement to attend to her "arduous and urgent affairs" in the House of Lords—no excuse would be accepted—"girding him with a sword and putting a cap of honour and a coronet of gold upon his head." No such theatrical props, it is true, were visible upon parade. Indeed the three noble Earls looked not so much like warriors as like the gardeners in *Alice in Wonderland*. With only the lightest and most unobtrusive of prodding Lord Attlee was got down on to his knees before the Lord Chancellor.

The Lord Chancellor, in black, sat on the Woolsack, his hands statuesquely by his side, so motionless that not even his dearest enemy would suggest that he was alive. The Earl Attlee promised to



"bear true and faithful allegiance to Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth" and signed the Test Roll to say so.

The three Belted Ones then processed together to the Earls' bench, where they proceeded to sit down and get up and sit down again in accordance with the prescribed ritual, very much like people in church who go on saying "Let us pray" when they have already been praying for about half an hour without stopping. Then back to the Lord Chancellor. Up shot the Lord Chancellor's hand, like one of Sir Brian Robertson's railway-signals working to rule. Down again went the signal for the train to proceed, and the Newly Belted vanished behind the Throne for a well-earned cup of tea. Mr. Emrys Hughes viewed the spectacle in well-bred amazement from the Distinguished Strangers' Gallery, and which was there among us who did not murmur

*You're a better man than I am,
Gunga Din?*

Then back to the House of Commons to hear Mr. Aneurin Bevan apologizing for having divided the Ministry of Housing from the Ministry of Health. It was like the Emperor Constantine. "We tried having two separate Empires, but it did not work." Or perhaps St. Paul explaining his mistake in writing the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians. "After the success of the first Epistle we thought the market would stand for a second, but we were wrong. We've got Heaven knows how many copies on our hands. The thing just won't move."

CHRISTOPHER HOLLIS





BOOKING OFFICE

The Freewill of Father Brown

FATHER Brown, the small, moon-faced, outwardly ineffectual Catholic priest with the unmanageable umbrella and the innocently criminal mind, started his clerical career as a curate in Hartlepool (apparently a tough parish, where the members of his "little flock" wore spiked bracelets up their sleeves, trafficked in stolen handbags and duplicate brown-paper parcels, and were proficient in the use of such esoteric forms of unarmed combat as the Spots and the Donkey's Whistle). It seems uncertain at what precise date he acted as chaplain in a Chicago prison (where psychometric and word-association tests had just been introduced as aids to detection by a scientifically-progressive Governor), but his first adventures, though chronicled in the *Saturday Evening Post*, did not contain the pungently ironical criticism of transatlantic civilization expressed in later episodes and were set predominantly in the British Isles—with the single exception of a dinner-party at the house of Aristide Valentin, Chief of the Paris Police, which resulted in the murder of a guest and the suicide of the host, who was himself the murderer.

By 1911, however, Fr. Brown—though officially the Roman Catholic incumbent of a small village (Cobhole, in Essex)—was sufficiently in the confidence of his ecclesiastical superiors to be entrusted with the silver-and-sapphire cross which Flambeau, the "colossus of crime" ("a figure as statuesque and international as the Kaiser") attempted abortively to steal. Thereafter the little priest—transferred to London in time to prevent Flambeau getting away with the expensive cutlery of an exclusive dining-club (each silver fish-knife was "loaded at the hilt with one large pearl")—devoted much of his spare time to foiling and ultimately redeeming this legendary malefactor, who was soon installed as a private inquiry agent in Lucknow Mansions, Hampstead (the contents of his "rococo artistic den" at

this address seems scarcely compatible with the exalted social origin attributed to him in a recent film-version: nor are any illegally-acquired art treasures included in the descriptive catalogue of "sabres, harquebuses, Eastern curiosities, flasks of Italian wine," and "savage cooking-pots"). Unfortunately, after his redemption, Flambeau—who had once erected a portable pillar-box "at corners in quiet suburbs on the chance of strangers dropping postal-orders into it"—lost much of his early *panache* and degenerated into the rôle of a mere Watson: following Fr. Brown about from crime to crime and exclaiming in bewilderment at his cryptic utterances; trembling at times on the



verge of ingenuousness ("Black magic," repeated Flambeau in a low voice, for he was too enlightened a man not to know of such things"); at others, content to twirl his militant Gascon moustaches and recall, with faint nostalgia, some exploit from the bad old days: his "gigantic stature" and "fantastic physical strength" employed to stun sinister one-eyed innkeepers with wooden benches; subdue the stalwart gardeners who so often acted as auxiliaries to more nebulous and Machiavellian masters; and, finally, to affect the arrest of Tiger Tyrone, a Hibernian rascal with felonious predilections not dissimilar from his own in youth, who (despite some infrequent

homicides, grave-robbing, and probable experiments in diabolism) seems destined also for repentance and conversion to a less irresponsible way of life.

Fr. Brown's other penitents included Mike Moonshine, the ill-fated burglar with two beards, and James Welkin, the "Invisible Man," who struck down his rival Isidore Smythe among the mechanical servants he'd invented, and carried the corpse away under the very noses of the police (whether or not the latter was eventually brought to temporal justice, we shall never know; the reverend detective naturally would not betray him and was moreover—unlike his present-day fictional colleagues—interested in salvation rather than damnation: more concerned with the souls of others than in the tortured analysis of his own spiritual problems).

In later life he was allowed more mobility, bobbing up in the U.S.A., South America, France and Italy to confound the crooked and the corrupt with his brolly and his stumpy figure and his short-sighted blink, proceeding quietly to demonstrate the triumph of commonsense over materialism and superstition (whether fabulous, mystical or scientific) in a world where, despite its period flavour—the Frenchmen all wear beards, Americans are Yankees to a man, butlers still exist, English villages are unspoilt and London's "high suburban solitude" possesses a "speechless poetry"—the basic human values remain unchanged from those obtaining to-day.

Fr. Brown, as a priest, was the reverse of turbulent (though at moments of tension his voice could resound like a rolling drum or ring from every corner of a room like a bell); like his prototype, Monsignor John O'Connor of Bradford, he was neither haunted nor hunted; his freewill had chosen the path of simplicity and good, and though a sleuth himself, no Hound of Heaven or Hell followed in his track. A generation of readers accustomed to the self-consciously inadequate, guilt-ridden, and even delinquent catholic clerics of contemporary literature may be surprised to hear that he was not a great

sinner, and though known to call for wine or beer on a bitter-cold night, not a whisky-priest either—no author's inexorable finger prodded him in the direction of bed or bottle. Yet despite this lack of qualifications (by latter-day standards) his hat "like a black halo" might prove a symbolical portent; and among so many heterodox ecclesiastics clamouring for literary canonization, he stands perhaps a better chance than any.

J. MACLAREN-ROSS

A High-Pitched Buzz. Roger Longrigg. Faber, 12/6

Mr. Gutteridge's *The Agency Game* dealt with the advertising world at the end which overlaps with the seedier kinds of journalism; Mr. Longrigg deals with the other end, where young copy-writers share flats with barristers and entertain the débutante sisters of stock-broking school-friends. His tone is naturally quieter and his book both less farcical and less funny. The struggle for power is always interesting, even when it does not provide a corpse. The incidental delights, conversational, descriptive and feline, are well up to the glossiest of whodunits, but I found the love-affair, the book's real core, rather tepid compared with the sophisticated unmasking of murderers it replaces.

Mr. Longrigg has the avidity for material that is the real driving force of realism. He cannot get his characters into a bar without breaking off to give half a dozen impressions of the talkers in it. His picture of his unattractive milieu gives the feeling of complete accuracy and I imagine that is his justification: realism does not necessarily mean indignation. I suspect, however, that some reviewers of this enjoyable novel will talk weightily about satire.

R. G. G. P.

The Domestic Servant Class in Eighteenth-Century England. J. Jean Hecht. Routledge and Kegan Paul, 25/-

Although a gentleman might advertise for a cook and receive over a hundred applications, eighteenth-century servants were an uppish lot. Dining out was rendered hideous by their habit of lining up in the hall after the party for vails—vulgarily, tips—which so shocked foreign observers that one, Baron de Pöllnitz, wrote, "if a Duke gives me a Dinner four Times a Week, his Footmen would pocket as much of my Money as would serve my Expenses at the Tavern for a Week." Even when vails were finally abolished by an organized movement of employers (originating in Aberdeen), guests still had to pay the footmen's rake-off on playing-cards and candles.

On the other hand, the servant hierarchy itself seems to have changed little between the eighteenth-century and 1914. In 1900, Longleat, a typical big house, had forty-three indoor servants, or more than the Duke of Newcastle in

1734. Despite much recondite information about the chosen period, J. Jean Hecht, who is an American and, incidentally, a man, seems curiously unaware of this, as of many other aspects of English life.

J. M.

Here in Spain. Chapman Mortimer. Cresset Press, 21/-

Mr. Mortimer has a painter's eye for graphic description and the drama of landscape; a novelist's feeling for odd and amusing detail—a procession of caterpillars setting off by instinct for an unknown destination at the call of spring; a Malagueñan newspaper reporting the arrest of criminals nicknamed "Half Dead," "The Sting" and "Hard Bread"; a pilgrimage to La Mancha, where Dulcinea's village proved entirely dissimilar from Doré's illustrations and Cervantes's heroine had been allotted the shell of an imposing house with a coat-of-arms on the door.

Though his habit of posing rhetorical questions and anticipating the reader's comments is sometimes irritating, and his picture of Spain occasionally imbued with the romantic sentimentality which he seems so anxious to eschew, there is an impressively individual account of a corrida, during which one bull wanders morose and disillusioned round the ring after the *coup de grâce*, accompanied by a sympathetic torero: the author tells us that to some Spaniards this contest is symbolical of the sex-war, thus explaining the female breasts of Picasso's vanquished bullfighters.

J. M.-R.

Old Calabria. Norman Douglas. Secker and Warburg, 30/-

This account of wanderings in the South of Italy was first published in 1915 and it has some claim to being considered Norman Douglas's best book. There are parts of *South Wind* that time has decidedly dated. Here, where everything is presented in the first person, the mood of the author is as much of interest as the places described. Indeed



"When I spoke of our leader's retirement as proving catastrophic, I was referring not to Churchill but Hutton."

the mood of the author is perhaps the most important aspect of all Douglas's books. He was not exactly a wit, and his writing sometimes falls into a regrettable series of Edwardian clichés, but there remain always his own personal energy and prejudices: and often his flashes of humour and appreciation of situations. Mr. John Davenport has written an excellent preface to this reprint, which is most acceptable. Douglas remains an odd, unusual, talented figure, who, with all his literary gifts, perhaps realized himself more as a man, and a figure of his time, than a writer.

A. P.

AT THE PLAY

Plain and Fancy
(THEATRE ROYAL)

IN its time the American musical has travelled through some strange and troubled countries, but with *Plain and Fancy* it has come pretty well full circle and is back, theatrically, near *Oklahoma!*—though geographically its latest resting place is Pennsylvania, among an ultra-puritan community of immigrant farmers known as the Amish. These strict and rugged folk exist to-day (we are told in a programme note), sticking to their principles and resisting all the glossy temptations of the American way of life. To do this they must be moderately fanatical, and be bound together by a whole network of ritual; the disappointing thing about *Plain and Fancy* is that, having pricked our interest, it tells us so little about them. They do not drink or smoke (though not above growing tobacco); they do not wear buttons, for reasons unexplained; and they are superstitious, which might have given us some of the primitive mystery that was made so stirring in *Dark of the Moon*, but which in practice boils down to an argument about a boss-eyed bird painted on a barn. There is nothing here that could not apply to a gaggle of buttonless Wee Frees living near Peebles. A good deal of time is spent in showing us how quickly the men can erect a barn,

CAREERS OF THE FUTURE

THE result of the Careers of the Future Competition organized in connection with the Schoolboy's Own Exhibition is:

Prizes of Hercules Cycles to:

TIMOTHY STONE, Cranbrook, for his entry "Earth Farmer."

GEOFFREY STILL, Colston's Boys School, Bristol, for his entry "The Fashion Designer, 2156 A.D."

Consolation prizes of one guinea to:

STEPHEN R. HALL, Clark's College

ROGER HORTON, Eltham College

STUART F. MOORE, The King's School, Harrow

PETER ORWELL, Manorfield Primary School

C. K. S. URE, Tonbridge School

Prizewinners have been notified.

and how diligently the women perform in the kitchen, that might have taken us a little deeper into the byways of the Amish mind.

This being a musical, sombre tenets do not prevent them from dancing and singing at the drop of a hat. The plot is traditional, a wedding upset by the return of the bride's old love, and by the arrival of a couple of strangers from the great city, bringing with them a fatal bottle of whisky. These two New Yorkers are played sympathetically by SHIRL CONWAY and RICHARD DERR, and clearly Miss CONWAY could hold up a big comic part for an evening; they mark the contrast between New York and the Amish isolation, but they are employed as little more than stooges.

To complete the reasons why I think *Plain and Fancy* comes about half-way down the list of American musicals, when it might have come much higher, the lyrics are pedestrian and the music only average. But there grumbles cease abruptly. The production, by MORTON DA COSTA, is excellent. It has all the extraordinary drive and exactness that can whip up excitement until the blood tingles, and it has been very attractively mounted by RAOUL PENE DUBOIS who makes clever use of patchwork curtains and whose dresses are charming in their unaffectedness. The taste of *Plain and Fancy* is refreshing. Three big crowd scenes, the burning of a barn, the sending of a man to Coventry (called "shunning"

in the Amish vocabulary), and the tricking of two innocents at a vicious and spiv-ridden fair have the searching dramatic power of some of the best scenes in *Oklahoma!* The chorus sings magnificently as one voice; and the dancing left me breathless.

Again refreshingly, the cast does not include a single representative of those awful bull-roaring tenors with a Vesuvian emission of treacle. Both the girls and the men have been picked to suggest an artless hick innocence. GRACE O'CONNOR and JOAN HOVIS score all the way by their simplicity, and as the two brothers fighting for the same bride JACK DRUMMOND and REED DE ROUEN look as if they could use a hoe to advantage. The patriarch presiding over the buttonless brethren is taken with fine sonority by MALCOLM KEEN, who wears an enormous black hat and melts into humanity just in time to let true love have its way.

I only feel it is a pity the story is so ordinary, when with such a start it could have been so fascinating.

Recommended

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

The Strong are Lonely—(Haymarket 30/11/55), a powerful play with DONALD WOLFIT at his best. *The Whole Truth* (Aldwych—19/10/55), a thriller with two good acts. *La Plume de ma Tante* (Garrick—9/11/55), the French equivalent of the Crazy Gang.

ERIC KEOWN



[*Plain and Fancy*
Dan King—RICHARD DERR Hilda Miller—JOAN HOVIS Papa Yoder—MALCOLM KEEN



BICENTENARY

(FESTIVAL HALL—SADLER'S
WELLS—COVENT GARDEN)

SOME of us reached Mozart (born January 27, 1756) the thorny way.

Our first demiurge was Beethoven, our second Wagner. Stravinsky came third. For us *Les Noces* marked music's Year 1. Or perhaps we preferred Bartók. Over the *Mikrokosmos* piano pieces we knitted our fingers and our brows into happy sheepshank knots. Or, yet again, Alban Berg was our man. Could we, unaided by the Viennese analysts, have spotted the point in the slow movement of the Chamber Concerto at which the music turns upside down and runs backward from its own buffers? Not on our lives. But we swore black and blue (were we sincere?) that the music was as good one side up or way round as t'other.

Stuffed from the age of fifteen with these newnesses, opulences, excitements and conundrums, our ears had little room for the rock crystal of Mozart. His tinklings were technically flawless, we conceded. But what lay behind the technique, the smooth formulism? Precious little, we said, and went off to sit head in hands while the gramophone played the *Symphony of Psalms*.

It was a tatty *Don Giovanni* that gave me my first shake-up. Hadn't Bernard Shaw written something awestricken in a *Man and Superman* stage direction about the trombones which speak from behind the Commendatore's statue in the cemetery scene? Shaw wasn't a man to be awed readily. That was one of his weaknesses. Well then, I would listen for those trombones and see what the fuss was about.

From the first bar I knew Shaw had put me on to a good, unearthly thing. Those *Giovanni* trombones gave me as pretty a bout of gooseflesh as I had ever known in the opera house. At home on my piano I worked outward from the hard core of the cemetery music, soon knew *Giovanni* like the back of my teeth and swallowed it whole. Ottavio included, who, usually a short, rather strutting man in knee-length cloak, with rapier sticking out behind, makes *Il mio tesoro* look as if sung by a gamecock.

After *Giovanni* the way was easy, an ecstatic uphill ride. The cemetery trombones opened the door to other operas—*Figaro*, *Così*, *Flute*. Then came the symphonies. The *Jupiter* inducted me to a whole symphonic chain. I saw the finale of the *Jupiter* as an impassioned machine, blood and nerves within its steel. The slow movement had sinuosities which surprise me as much at the fiftieth hearing as at the first.

This honeymoon of mine with Mozart happened a long time ago. So long ago that I feared in advance that these centenary observances would be a bore, a duty visit, prolonged lip service in violation of conscience. Happily that is

not how things have turned out. As I write this, Londoners of the best musical sort—attentive, schooled and nearly coughless—are jamming the Festival Hall nightly for a week of bicentenary concerts by six leading London orchestras. They listen devoutly and happily. And so, against expectation, do I. A too placid bust of Wolfgang watches from the back row of the orchestra, alongside the timps., as JOSEF KRIPS, with the London Symphony Orchestra, gives us the *Jupiter* and *Haffner* symphonies. Next come OTTO KLEMPERER and the Philharmonia with the great G minor and the No. 29. The Requiem and C minor Masses are on the way, with yet more symphonies and a garnishing of concertos. One of the conductors is PAUL HINDEMITH, world celebrity. Otherwise this Mozart Festival, considered as a personality parade, is nearly as *routinier* as a week at the Proms. Not a bad thing, in its negative way. There are no compulsive gowns, worshipped profiles or thousand-guinea-a-night fees to get irrelevantly between Mozart and those who, without humbug or any sort of drumming and drilling, have paid to hear him.

In short, these Festival Hall genuflections, so far as they have gone, have been genuine, straight from the heart. I cannot write with equal cordiality about the *Don Giovanni* revival at the Wells. On a small stage cluttered uselessly with tons of built-up scenery (the dancers at the masked ball have hardly room to breathe, let alone move) a cast with much new blood in it behaved tamely under LEO QUAYLE, who more than once failed to make orchestra, chorus and principals toe the beat, so to say. Throughout the production there is a noticeable accent on comicalities—as is right and proper (argues an esteemed colleague) at the Wells. Why should there be a special *Giovanni* law for this particular house? For all of us there are one right way only and at least two-score wrong ones of producing *Giovanni*. The fact that our right ways all clash does not affect the principle of the thing.

At Covent Garden our eyes fret under a new *Magic Flute* with pillars and curtains by JOHN PIPER which expedite a story nobody except Professor Dent takes seriously and pall through sheer prettiness long before the night is over. On the first night there was much pleasant singing and some (notably that of ELSIE MORISON, the Pamina) that was brilliantly apt. Adverse things have been said about KUBELIK's conducting. For my own part I do not expect ever to hear better Mozart ensemble, orchestra and voices all in the hollow of one hand, than the first-act quintet, *Drei Knäbchen, jung, schön, hold und weise*. This and certain other *Flute* pages as handled by KUBELIK will stay long in the memory.

CHARLES REID

AT THE PICTURES



Rebel Without a Cause—Bel-Ami

NEARLY all criticism of *Rebel Without a Cause* (Director: NICHOLAS RAY) tends to be of the argument. The film is about "juvenile delinquents" and concentrates on three whose parents are variously inadequate, which makes it in some eyes "an attack on parents"; and the reaction of many a reviewer is a bluff, hearty boom to the effect that *his* parents were inadequate too, if it comes to that, but look at him, *he* never went round being a delinquent. (Alternatively, bearing in mind an important section of his readers, he indignantly denies that there ever has been anything wrong with *any* parents.)

Always disapproving of the line of criticism that bases itself on the pointless generalization "People don't behave like this" (for any story stands or falls by the success with which it presents individuals who believably *do* behave like that), I simply observe that the critic's autobiographical statements are not evidence unless his disposition, personality and circumstances were identical with those of the character concerned at the operative time—and it's safe to say they weren't.

So much being said, we can get down to a consideration of the film as a story and as film-making; and now the objectors spoil their whole case by having to admit that this is a very good, well-made and admirably acted piece. In other words, these individuals do respond credibly to these stresses: "people" don't behave like this, but it is satisfactorily established that these particular characters did. JAMES DEAN, who was killed after making one more film, is a great loss: his portrait of Jim, the central figure here, troubled by a weak father and a dominating, nagging mother, is memorably well done. The other two protagonists, NATALIE WOOD as Judy, a young girl with less obvious domestic reasons for being upset (her father rejects her affection, her mother doesn't "understand"), and SAL MINEO as a considerably younger boy, abandoned altogether by his parents, who pathetically tries to regard Jim and Judy as substitutes for them, are effective in a less striking way.

The subsidiary characters—including a number of intimidatingly unsympathetic young people at the school all three principals attend—are convincingly objectionable or (in rare instances, for example an understanding probation officer) helpful, and all the circumstances of a life outside the experience of most filmgoers here are shown with compelling interest and skill. I found the film extremely well worth while.

I don't know the Maupassant novel, but *Bel-Ami* (Director: LOUIS DAQUIN) struck me as straightforwardly entertaining in its own right. Visually, for one thing, it is most attractive: colour used



Jim Starke—JAMES DEAN

delicately in the same way as CLAIR used it in *Les Grandes Manœuvres*—his was Eastman, this is Agfacolor—constantly presents scenes reminiscent of Renoir (the period is late nineteenth century). The main point of the story is, of course, a satirical one: we see the central character Georges Duroy—Georges Duroy de Cantele—as he quite calculatingly uses his amorous adventures for personal advancement. His successive mistresses, by virtue (if that is the word) of being the wives or daughters of important people, have influence, and eagerly exert it to please him; and at last we leave him sitting pretty after a "good" marriage. No depth of emotion or real exploration of character, but a very pleasing picture of a period.

Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

In London: RENÉ CLAIR's enjoyable pre-1914 comedy *Summer Manœuvres*, or *Les Grandes Manœuvres* (25/1/56); and, more controversial but undeniably full of brilliance, *The Man With the Golden Arm* (25/1/56). *Les Diaboliques* (14/12/55) and *Richard III* (28/12/55) continue; and probably the very good suspense piece *The Desperate Hours* can still be found.

Brightest and best of the new releases: *The Tender Trap* (4/1/56). *The Girl in the Red Velvet Swing* (18/1/56) is a well done, quite absorbing melodrama about the Thaw-White murder case of 1906.

RICHARD MALLETT

ON THE AIR

Mostly in Praise

CONFRONTED nightly by so much drivel, television critics are tempted to deal generously with any programme that shows a spark of intelligence or uplift. I often find myself writing in glowing terms about documentaries, feature programmes and dramatic fragments that deserve no more than the faintest of praise, but I am not at all sure that ruthless evaluation would in the long run be helpful to the qualitative progress of television. We have seen what happens to the more serious items of entertainment when they get the bird or the slow handclap from the popular Press: they are faded out, adulterated or cut to ribbons. The Hallé has been pushed out of the I.T.A. limelight, the news has been axed and de-Crawleyed, "The Scientist Replies" has been crippled, B.B.C. documentaries have become melodramatic, ballet has almost disappeared and drama has become a thing of shreds, patches and excerpts.

There is a long queue of parlour games, crooners, disc-jockeys, comedy teams and American soap operas waiting to leap into dead men's shoes, and rumours of the slightest indisposition in a middlebrow programme set the mushroomers hopping with anticipation. In future I shall be kind to culture.

Even to "Panorama," which has recently lost its bright, inquiring, purposeful look and degenerated into a rag-bag of trivia. The team of regular performers led by Richard Dumbleby is strong, but its talents are being abused. Important controversies are ignored to make room for material which should be left to "More Contrary" or the lighter



J. B. PRIESTLEY

[Books and Authors]

periodicals. I complain too about the shock tactics employed by Woodrow Wyatt in his reports from the world's trouble-spots. To viewers with a broad knowledge of the problems under discussion his terse asides and candid snapshots are refreshing and illuminating, but to struggling headline-nourished laymen his summary adjudications are often misleading. It would surely be wiser—and hang the expense!—to employ two reporters with rival affiliations.

Max Robertson handles "Panorama's" middleweight topicalities with immense charm and a welcome modesty, yet his corner in the programme often falls flat for lack of skilful cutting and editing. Not long ago he took us to France to preview the elections and showed us no more than a film of the Channel crossing, a few pictures of electioneering posters and a close-up of vegetables. Not good enough. "Panorama" must recover its poise and purpose: its titling and introductory music suggest a feast of

instructive comment and review, and we are not getting it.

For perfect television (yes, perfect) I turn to the latest edition of "Look." This was a wonderful mixture of film and studio gossip on the subject of the tracks left in the snow by birds and wild animals. The performers to sparkle were Peter Scott, Maxwell Knight and Walter Flesher, a Yorkshire game-keeper. The producer was Brandon Acton-Bond. Not a second or word was wasted: the atmosphere was informal, relaxed, friendly, enthusiastic and undemonstratively erudite. And at the end Peter Scott had the courage to say that he hoped viewers "would learn something from what they had seen." They would.

Another useful programme is the fortnightly chat by J. B. Priestley on "Books and Authors." Priestley is an excellent broadcaster, and this series, in which he gets authors to talk about their works, methods and business principles, deserves a long run. I am hoping, however, that future editions will tackle books that have more to say than Nicholas Blake's *The Tangled Web*.

Finally, an award of decent marks to "Spanner in the Works," a B.B.C. discussion on industrial discontents. This was a remarkably uneven symposium, with the practical industrial magnates (Sam Watson, "a trade unionist," and F. C. Hooper, "a managing director") talking all the sense and hogging most of the battle honours, and the academicians (Professor Sargent Florence and J. A. C. Brown, "industrial psychologist") talking most of the nonsense and receiving all the punishment. Huw Weldon was a lively referee.

BERNARD HOLLOWOOD



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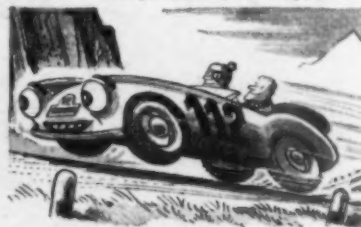
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FEBRUARY

The Twenty-Niners

MISFORTUNE IMPENDS this month for a large number of individuals who have done nothing to deserve it. We cannot know how many babies, in countries whose calendars recognise the existence of Leap Year, are going to be born on February the 29th; and we can only conjecture how their characters and outlook will be affected by this natal solecism. It will not, one supposes, be until some years later that most of them will be likely to get an inkling of their invidious position. How do parents handle this delicate problem? Birthdays are important institutions in a child's world, and to discover that it is really only entitled to one every four years may well have an unsettling effect on the more introspective type of eight-year-old.

The usual custom is to celebrate the happy event on February the 28th; but one scarcely needs to be a senior wrangler to see that some element of inequity is involved in this practice. For it makes the twenty-niners—on paper—the same age as children who were in fact born a day before them, and nursery casuists are capable of magnifying in a variety of uncharitable ways the significance of this minor adjustment. Only an expert in child-psychology could tell us whether a sense of deprivation or a sense of privilege is in the long run the more likely to affect the ego of a Leap Year baby; and all we can do is to hope that the new arrivals, by the time they come of age in 1977, will have suffered no really serious ill effects from having had only five celebrations on the right birthday.



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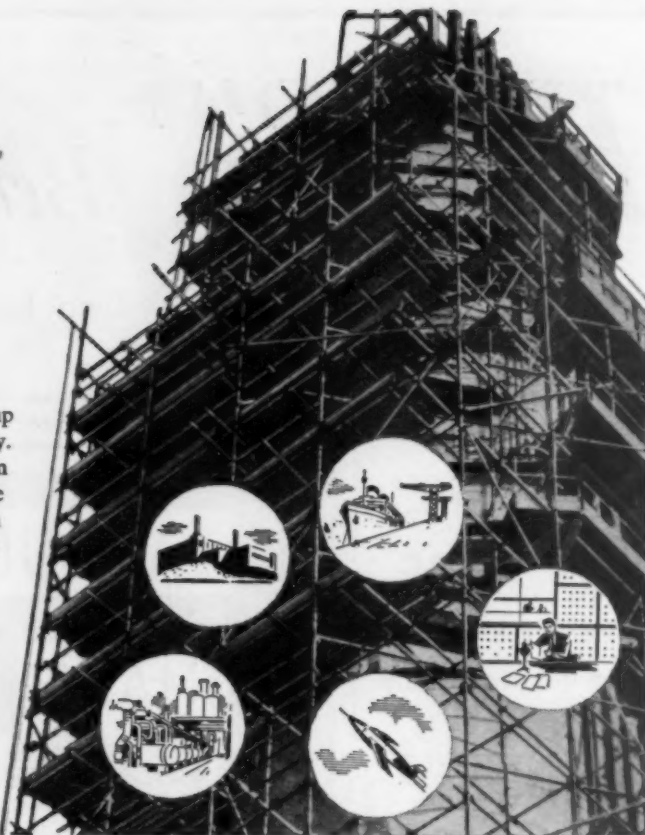
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